

General Patton on Vietnam

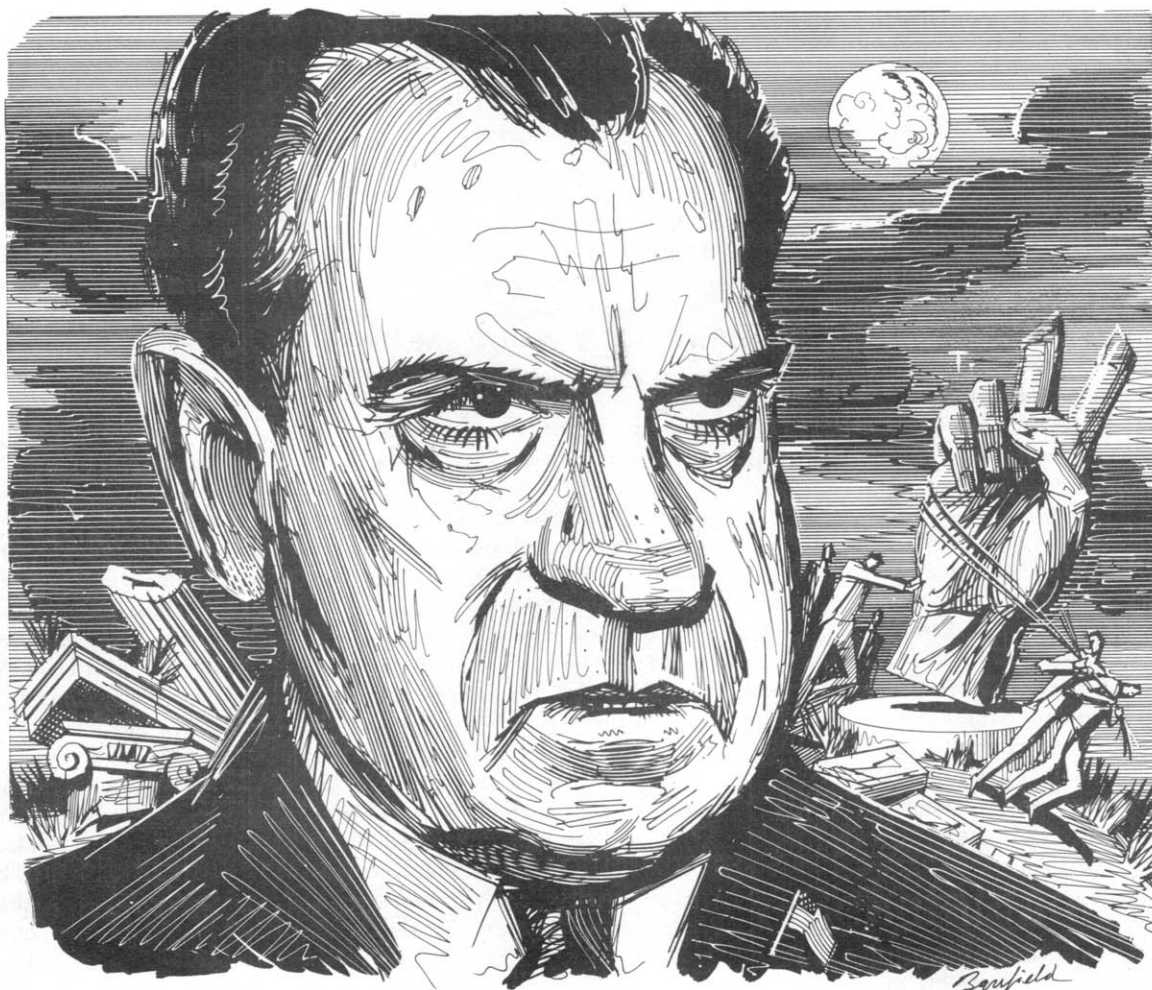
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# The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

FORMERLY THE ALTERNATIVE: AN AMERICAN SPECTATOR



*Richard Milhous Nixon: The Serenade in B-Flat*

*Ivan & Miriam London: Street Gangs in China*

*Anne Crutcher: The Feminine Mistake*

*Seymour Martin Lipset: Carter's First 496 Days*

*John Lukacs: A Century of National Socialism*

*Eleanor Dulles reviews Dulles*

Vol. 11, No. 8 / June/July 1978 / One Dollar

# THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• April through May, and the political science of our populist buffoon continues to amaze the world. In foreign chancelleries everywhere diplomats crowd before their teletypes eager for every fresh report of Washington hijinks. Rarely has Washington attracted such avid curiosity abroad. Who doubts that even in remote Bangladesh there resides a lowly peasant who, after plodding through furrows, his face impassively set toward the undulating hindquarters of a mortgaged bovine, rushes home to inquire: "What's the latest with the Washington yokel, eh?" The inquiry rarely leaves him unconsolated.

• Of late, the President of the United States publicly described Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; greeted Mr. Nicolae Ceausescu, President of Rumania, with the wrong national anthem; and at a flag-raising ceremony in Spokane, Wash., could not find the flag, though no one else had any difficulty. There he stood, hand on heart, staring stonily into the faces of a thousand Spokane, as they gazed upon Old Glory rising majestically behind him. Did our president take the hint and amiably turn around? Not at all. The lone populist stared resolutely forward, and it was not until a local pol gently remonstrated with him that he gave up his hilarious pose.

• In May, our president went on a political fence-mending tour of the west and on May 4 startled a contented meeting of the Los Angeles Bar Association by suddenly yelling much in the fashion of a fundamentalist wailer swathed by rattlesnakes and reaching for the strychnine. "I have inspected many prisons and I know that nearly all inmates are drawn from the ranks of the powerless and the poor," he declaimed. "We are overlawyered and underrepresented," he insisted. He called vagrancy a "social disease," and departed for the state of Washington where, in the midst of a speech on health care, he broke into a kind of glossolalia of vitriol against doctors and the American Medical Association. At no point in his western tour did he actually mention the Bilderbergers, the Rothschilds, or a Swiss bankers' conspiracy, but anthropologists who now study his every move suspect that he had such culprits on his mind. After all, in Washington he had noisily vetoed a rabbit-meat inspection program, bravely identifying the action as another of his tough measures against inflation. Late in April, our president gave sworn testimony, which if believed would have sent a Georgia state senator to the hoosegow on federal conspiracy charges. Needless to say, the Georgia jury, whose members have already had years of experience with our president, released the alleged felon post-haste.

• Is this really the democratic solution to Richard Nixon, the improvement on Gerald Ford? America is now governed by a concatenation of jokes. The horselaugh has replaced our national anthem. Dogberries are on sale in vending machines in the White House and in souvenir shops all over Washington. What is it that limits Russian mischief to Africa and the Middle East? What is it that protects us from rapacious Albanians or an invasion by an

armada of crazed Laotians? I have come to believe that all that keeps the Russians from being even more obstreperous than they now are is "the bonkers factor." It is a factor whose benefits the students of geopolitics have sadly underestimated. What restrains the Soviets today is the sound suspicion that our president is a real nut. Only Zeus knows what he might do when aroused.

• There is now some speculation that World War III was launched on April 20. Then it was that a South Korean commercial jet strayed into Soviet air space, apparently unbeknownst to the Soviet air defense system, another fine product of Russian technical know-how. Norwegian radar tracked the flight, but it was not until the Boeing 707 lumbered over heavily-guarded, secret military installations—a flight of at least 18 minutes—that the comrades looked up to see the menace and scrambled to their Migs. In hysteria they blasted away at the plane, killing two civilians and wounding ten others. Then they either lost sight of the crippled plane for an hour and a half or had their minds on other matters, for the plane flew all over north Russia before finally landing on a frozen Russian lake, probably a health spa. My guess is that they had their minds on other matters, namely: letting fly against all their enemies with their first-strike missile force. This they did, and with the same success that they had had with their air defense system. Based on the Soviets' historic tradition for turning out lemons, I have long suspected that World War III might turn out this way, and I would dearly have loved to see the look on Papa Brezhnev's muzzle when he gave the order to let the world have it, only to be met with hundreds of fizzles. We do know that when the old rascal turned up in West Germany for meetings with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt he looked haggard and, according to Mr. Egon Bahr, business manager of the West German Social Democratic Party, consumed a bottle and a half of vodka in two days. And Hermy, a hermaphroditic burro recently captured in a remote corner of Inyo County, California, has been rescued by the American Humane Association from scientists who, if they had their way, would experiment on her/him.

• Actress Vanessa Redgrave has returned to London to campaign for her brother Corin, a candidate for Parliament on the Workers' Revolutionary ticket. Miss Redgrave, the star of such artistic treasures as *The Devils*, in which she played a sex-starved, hunchbacked nun, believes the present British government to be "the most vicious and most treacherous the working class has ever faced"—something to think about. Twenty-four-year-old Mr. Ron Hansen has filed suit in a Boulder, Colorado, District Court seeking \$350,000 in damages from his parents for what his clever lawyer describes as "parental malpractice." According to his suit, Hansen will be in need of psychiatric care throughout his life because of his parents' "intentional infliction of emotional distress." The Oklahoma House has rejected a proposal requiring written consent from a woman before a man might engage her in the ultimate sexual embrace. The bill also would have required the

man to inform the woman that she might be impregnated by his act and that childbirth could result in serious health problems. History will note that the bill was the work of Rep. Clea Deatherage.

• Opponents of the neutron bomb were given much to think about after a microcosmic demonstration of one of the bomb's commanding virtues was provided in Cary, North Carolina, by Mr. Gary Sowers, deceased. At a grim pre-divorce conference with his wife, Mr. Sowers detonated conventional explosives covertly strapped around his waist, killing them both, but also causing vast and unnecessary damage to a richly-appointed law office full of fine antiques. After a two-to-one vote against St. Paul, Minnesota's gay rights law, that city's mayor, Mr. George Latimer, solemnly entreated pederasts not to leave the city, assuring them that they remain "human beings." In Wichita, Kansas, an even more overwhelming vote against pederasts two weeks later sent a chill through every hair salon in the country.

• An Indiana sociologist has suggested that tiny transmitters be implanted in New York City rag women to enable scientists to study the travels of these interesting urban dwellers about whom very little is known. Moved by the tragic demise of Bubbles, a California hippopotamus, Mr. Lowell Darling is seeking that state's Democratic nomination for governor. In his platform he promises to replace wild zoo animals with human stand-ins, thus freeing the wild animals to return to their natural habitats. Yet Mr. Darling's campaign has taken an unexpectedly nasty turn. He now suggests that his human stand-ins be chosen from prisoners and the unemployed who "learn tricks quicker than wild animals"—a familiar neo-conservative theme.

• An 18-year-old freshman at the University of Wisconsin, whose mother is Executive Director of the Wisconsin Civil Liberties Union, has had his application for a Playboy Bunny position rejected and is now reviewing relevant judicial decisions that might retrieve his cruelly aborted career. In Indianapolis, Indiana, Mr. Robert Gibson took seven persons hostage and held them for thirteen hours, when he became distraught "by little things that are driving me up the wall...the guy who parks in two parking places, beer bottles...in the parking lot, and kids revving their motorcycles while I'm sleeping." Flagitious provocations indeed, yet think of the provocation provided the White House by an editorial from the May 13-19 issue of London's *Economist*. According to that authoritative magazine, Vice President Mondale—"the kind of American who likes to call himself decent and progressive"—while touring Southeast Asia "made an understandable ass of himself" by lecturing his hosts on human rights and, in nations with stupendously more robust growth rates than America's, patronizing them with idiotic foreign-aid programs "plainly picked to tickle the trendy ignorant voters...back home." Alas, "it is a sign of the essential small-town niceness of the Carter administration that Mr. Mondale still does not realize that last week he dropped bricks all over Asia." —RET

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## Richard Milhous Nixon: The Serenade in B-Flat

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Richard Milhous Nixon, 5' 10", 165 pounds, Caucasian, male, no distinguishing features. Though a man as common as anything on display in a Sears catalogue, he rose steadily to become the most widely reviled man in American history. Have I overegged the pudding? Well then, suggest to me his equal; from all history bring one forward. Even a Will Durant, even a Toynbee, would be hard pressed to find an analogue. Popular journalists resort to the name Nixon to galvanize feelings not even the name Stalin raises. The phobia he stimulates in millions of America's most virtuous and enlightened citizens is impossible to exaggerate, and this seems to be true of people all over the world. From 1970 to 1975, a poll conducted by Mme. Tus-saud's Waxwork Muséum found him to be among the five most hated and feared men in history. In 1975 only Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada and the late Adolf Hitler surpassed him. Count Dracula tied him, and Jack the Ripper finished a poor fifth.

How is it that the father of Tricia and Julie has earned such disesteem? Is it for his wicked deeds: prosaic lies endlessly repeated, eavesdropping, the bombing of Cambodian progressives, the harassment of North Vietnam's liberal democrats, those brummagem uniforms he ordered for the White House guards? Surely they do not compose the *corpus delicti*. Discreditable acts they are indeed, but there must be more to the Nixon legend than this. Not even Franklin Roosevelt, not even Anita Bryant, is so hotly scorned. Hows come?

When one studies Nixon's public career—his first yelps in Congress; the sobs and growls of his vice-presidential years; the sonorities, the scowls, the whines of presidential greatness—when one studies his opponents—their increasing alarm, their jeremiads, their sniffings, and the eerie regularity with which their reasonable objections metamorphosed into ridiculousities—it grows ever more apparent that this is not a typical political struggle. Rather it is an incomparable succession of bizarreries so traumatizing as to be explicable only in terms numenous and diabolical.

Everything about the man suggests palpable weirdness. Mention his name and millions of Americans leap to their feet yelling. Some, admittedly, have their hands over their hearts. Others have their hands at their throats. They gurgle. They report hearing wild dogs barking and maidens sobbing. Not infrequently they end their lives shouting helplessly from the Freudian couch. Even in American politics such doings are unusual. It is my considered judgment that in the very White House where such giants as Lyndon John-

son and the sainted Kennedy brought their immense dignity, wisdom, and integrity, the Commoner from Whittier suffered diabolical infestation, and no one tried to help. Poor Nixon, everything he touched grew fangs and let out a howl: welfare reform, a generation of peace, an unbalanced budget. In Nixon's hands all such noble aspirations went sinister. "Tory men and liberal policies are what have changed the world," he buoyantly proclaimed, and his guaranteed annual income plan was promptly slaughtered in Congress. Domestic advisors like Daniel Patrick Moynihan were appalled; they had never seen liberals act so strangely. Yet seasoned Nixon observers remained calm. The miraculous destructiveness of the Nixon touch is for them a legend.

Hugh Kenner has said that Nixon should not have been president on aesthetic grounds. It is an observation abounding with truth and stimulative of hitherto unimagined hopes for the presidency. Yet I have always contained my objections to more immediate concerns. Nixon should not have been president for reasons of public health and safety. His presence causes too much distress. In fact I suspect that over the years the untimely deaths of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of America's most upright citizens can be laid to a Nixon press conference, a UPI photograph of the man with his dog, or any of a myriad of other Nixonian apparitions. For instance, Nixon was campaigning strenuously just before the death of Paul Goodman, and during his 1970 European junket we lost Janis Joplin. I take it as a mark of the enormous strength of that great and good man, Alger Hiss, that he survived the entire Nixon reign, though his gaunt mug and watery eyes tell us much about how he has suffered through the "New American Revolution," the "New Federalism," the "China Opening," Julie's "wedding," and all the other dubious public-relations stunts.

The astonishing misfortune that befalls those who come into contact with Nixon is a riveting reminder of the power the occult plays in his life. Whether friend or foe, one steps from his presence and as likely as not the sky falls in. It is uncanny. The closer one's contact with him, the greater one's peril. His friends suffer bankruptcy, the loss of dozens of IQ points, broken spirits, and, with astounding frequency, the calaboose. His enemies suffer similar calamities. I can count three who have been assassinated and several who have been maimed. Dignity, well-being, and soundness of mind so often depart after a close brush with the man that I have no doubt his career is more comprehensible to a

medieval mystic ensconced in a cave than to a modern rationalist with all his books and analytical gear.

Most spectacularly there was the late President Kennedy. Not only was he the first modern president shot from ambush, but he died under circumstances that still excite morbid speculation. His instantaneous apotheosis proved only to be a diabolical prank, making his eventual fall all the more ignominious. It was idolatry contrived from a presidency of singular mediocrity and a life of stunning sham. Nevertheless, soon the facts made their debut: petty political fixing, ineptitude as grandiose as his oratory, a whole family of pinheads and rascals. Floozies began stepping forward from every trailer camp in America, coyly testifying to their personal involvement with what the suave president had cockily called "class." The revelations dragged his reputation from nadir to undreamt of nadir, and soon there was a movement to remove his pictures from the Catholic schools of Iowa. Today the scholars are at work. Nothing can stop them, and within a decade his policies will be the most discredited of any president's since Hoover. His reputation will thud into that dark hole which for more than half a century has been the domicile of Warren Gamaliel Harding alone. Had JFK run against any other Republican doubtless he would be with us today, and his administration would have been enormously more creditable. Did Pat Brown fare much better? Upon beating Nixon for the California governorship in 1962, he rapidly became a laughing-stock, and it is now apparent that fate dealt him an idiot for a son.

What of Nixon's later opponents? With surprising constancy they are sick, dead, convicted of low deeds, under threat of conviction, banished, or absurd. The friends and associates of Richard Nixon have already, and in unusually large numbers, had the prison door clank behind them. Now begin the tribulations of his enemies. The column of petty malefactors and suspects straggles forward. Remember Senator Joseph M. Montoya of the Watergate Spectacular? Remember the Rt. Hon. Carl Albert? Where are they now? Why did they abscond from the limelight so hastily? Think well on the cyclones that struck the gorgeous careers of the Rt. Hon. Wayne Hays and the voluptuous Wilbur Mills. What will become of the blubbing Speaker O'Neill? Will he join the Rt. Hon. Richard T. Hanna, the Rt. Hon. Cornelius Gallagher, the Rt. Hon. Frederick W. Richmond, poor ex-congressman Allan T.

(continued on page 40)



Miriam & Ivan D. London

## The Gang of Fourteen: Street Life in China

A young street tough from a city deep in the Chinese interior—which we must forbear naming—recently came to tea and talk with us. He was still in culture shock, the result of a miraculously sudden East-West transition. On the one hand, stunned by western material abundance, he felt that he had flown “from earth to heaven.” On the other, he had wholly lost his nerve; for the fact was that he had been man-about-town in China, cocksure about assessing any local situation and handling himself appropriately. Now he was as raw and bewildered as a country bumpkin—the very sort of person he had mocked back home. However, he showed no timidity in speaking about himself. We shall call him pseudonymously, in the Chinese manner—“Little Peng.”

Street gangs, both criminal and of the “West Side Story” kind—Little Peng belonged to the latter—seem to thrive out of control in many cities of China, much as they do elsewhere in the world. Chinese recently from Canton and Shanghai often blame the proliferation of such gangs, along with a general increase in urban crime, on the demoralization of Party and school authority since 1966, the beginning of the cultural revolutionary “epoch.” The gangs, they say, also attract floating outcast youth—some of the millions of urban middle-school graduates assigned annually to permanent labor in the countryside, who sneak back into the cities, where they no longer have legal right to residence or employment. The authorities periodically conduct raids to clear the streets of accumulated “rusticated youth,” along with peasant beggars and other illegals—in Shanghai this is called “blowing up the red typhoon”—but the whole company drifts back again in calmer “weather.”

All seemingly true. But—we stir uneasily—are we merely seeing the peculiarly Chinese decor of a universal play? Have we not also in the West wrongly confused social conditions with ultimate causes? But here comes Little Peng straight off stage. We may observe him and listen to his story.

Little Peng lasted one week on the state farm to which he was sent after completing nine years of schooling. “Such rotten housing!” he said. “They told us it was the best they had. No glass in the windows, no ceiling, just a leaky roof. We slept on piles of straw. The food was even worse. And for a drink of water, we had to shoulder a pail and walk a whole kilometer to a well.”

After hightailing it back home, he did not have to worry, like many others, about his rice bowl. His parents, highly paid cadre members, were well able to support him. But his real life, as it always had been, was on the street.

To Little Peng the Red Guard mass movement of 1966 is the dead past. He never followed the great Red Pied Piper in exultation, only to reach the barren fields of despair. He was too small. By the time he became adolescent in the seventies, Mao to him

was a plaster Buddha, from behind which peered a baffling and inept old man. China would have been much better off, Little Peng thinks, “if Mao had died long before Chou En-lai,” who, as it was, could do little more than “mend” the old bungler’s mistakes.

When Little Peng and friends “had great fun” playing tricks on peasant peddlers on the streets and stealing their wares, the peasants would sometimes wail, “How can you good students of Chairman Mao behave this way?!” A common retort was: “Chairman Mao’s good student? Let him get me a good job and then I’ll be his good student!”

Little Peng found no model for emulation at school, or whatever passed for school during most of this strange decade in China, when—to cite a recent confession of the *Peking Review*—the reigning “Gang of Four” “retarded the development of a whole generation of young people.” School was “open the door and have your school outside!” said Little Peng. “Let students have practical work in the field and all that.... The truth was we students *hated* school. Schooling or not, you’re sent to the countryside anyway. One day of school meant one day of fooling around. ‘If you’re a monk, you’ve got to toll the bells.’ If we wanted to go to school, we went. If we were bored, we put our feet up on the desk.”

He made no bones about his “extreme disrespect” for teachers—an attitude conveniently encouraged by the anti-intellectual campaigns of the time. “It got started during the ‘Criticize Lin Piao and Confucius Movement [of 1974],’” he explained. “Confucius had stood for respecting teachers—so we didn’t want that!”

If a teacher got nasty about imposing discipline, Little Peng and his friends would retaliate by stealing his school supplies or (more fancifully): “We’d shape up a piece of s--t, attach the teacher’s name tag to it, and put it in the drawer of his podium.... That was only ‘light revenge.’ ‘Heavy revenge’ was to go to the teacher’s house at night and batter it with rocks, breaking windows and all that.”

Little Peng had equal contempt for the ideologically “positive” student elite, members of the Red Guards—a toothless classroom organization in the seventies—and the higher-ranking Communist Youth League.

“I never was a Red Guard and I wouldn’t want to be one. My good friends all shared this view, because a Red Guard may end up with a good factory job, but socially he’s on poor ground. And we wouldn’t want to be classed with any of them! Those Red Guards and League members are an eyesore to the rest of us...because they’re automatically agents and spies.... They turn in regular reports to the ‘above’ and give us a pain. Suppose a group of us good friends are talking together and this Red Guard shows up and wants to join in. We’d all clam up. And if he still showed no sign of leaving, we’d say, ‘Beat it, before you get poisoned.’”

Little Peng did not even credit the idealism of these ranking activists. “Their faces,” he said, “don’t always match their hearts, for the simple reason that the fear is always there—the fear

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of drawing criticism and misfortune on themselves...." Their dilemma was unenviable: If they toned down criticism of their classmates' ideological failings, they would "suffer pressure from the 'above'"; if they showed proper zeal in personal attack, they faced the inimitable "revenge" of victims like Little Peng and friends. "With Red Guard cadres you can settle accounts right inside school. With League members outside. As for class branch secretaries [of the League], you have to do this [beat them up] secretly, lest you get a demerit or warning."

Little Peng thus kept a healthy distance from politics. However, "when it comes to bigger campaigns...then it's unavoidable—so, when you're told to write a piece, you write it. When you're told to read your piece, you read it—just enough, not too much, to show you have a correct attitude....The idea is to stay in the middle—don't behave too well or too poorly." But, generally, he stressed, "There are three don'ts to bear in mind: don't listen, don't talk, and don't join."

We are about to draw a false conclusion: Little Peng had no political idols. We are in for a surprise.

"I don't know about other provinces," he said, "but young people in our province [read: himself and friends] genuinely worshipped Stalin and Lenin. And Hitler and Japanese General Tojo—the *kamikaze* spirit. We admired these."

What did this flatly cross-ideological assortment of heroes have in common? "Well, Stalin [seen in a Soviet film, shown for "educational purposes"]—we were just bowled over by his military style, his awesome presence...and especially when we compared Stalin, the military commander, with our own military chiefs—all so shabby-looking, without even shoulder boards or insignia for rank...." Lenin (depicted in a Soviet film), while not exactly military in bearing, had an "air of great political authority." He was "disciplined and demanding, but just."

As for Hitler and Tojo, it did not matter that they had been included among "World War II criminals" described in history class. "We were impressed by their invasions of other countries," he explained, "...and how they commanded their armies. For example, the blitzkrieg tactic."

Little Peng would himself have been surprised to learn that a decade ago the fanatic Mao-worshipping Red Guards—now a musty bore to him—also included here and there admirers of Hitler. A few "combat teams" in Fukien Province, for example, had sported the lightning symbol for blitzkrieg on their armbands. A paradox? Not if we rub the present from our eyes for a moment to see the triumphant ghost of Genghis Khan galloping toward us across the dusty centuries. The instinctive generalization of a Little Peng may be more valid in the long run than the ideological hair-splitting of academe.

"Let me tell you what interests young people," he said. We now leave Valhalla for the People's Republic. "In our province, there are young people who worship fighting and fighters. Some fighters actually battle their way from one province to another!...They're desperadoes," he explained, "they don't fear death." And, best of all, they "get to be famous."

"Fame for what?" he continued, excitedly. "What's to be gained by it, you may ask?" He answered his own question through illustration. Take a restaurant:

"The usual practice in restaurants is this: A waiter shows up with a note pad and asks the customer what dishes he wants to order. The customer orders, pays for the dishes [in advance] and then he's served. However, when a *famous* man shows up and the waiter says, please pay, the famous man says, 'I don't have any money.' 'Eh!' says the waiter, 'how can you eat without money?!' Then the famous man just says, 'I'm Three Daggers.' Well, that's enough to scare the waiter out of his wits. He not only brings the order, but something else besides. And he'll say to the famous man, 'Would you like to try our specialties?'"

These famous fighters "start out, of course, in school," Little Peng said. He spoke from personal knowledge. One of them had been a "best friend since primary school days." ("He taught me to fight even then—and he really knew how. Even during class he'd show me.")

"Then," he said, "they get out into society and form organizations and gangs....A small gang may have ten members—a bigger gang twenty to thirty....Rule No. 1 for joining a gang is a sealed mouth. When the police nab you, not a word must leak out. Don't admit anything. If it's discovered that a fellow has blabbed, he'll get 'fixed'....I mean bloodletting—two or three stabs. Rule No. 2—absolute obedience. Let me tell you, it's a real organization. Obedience means when you're ordered to find a certain person and bring him to a certain place—for a fight or any other reason—you've got to do it and know how to. If you fail, you get beaten up or there'll be some more bloodletting....Let me tell you! Even girls joined—all without jobs. They're stifled. [Little Peng's voice became a whisper.] Whores! You know, they're given everything by the gang...an short, food and clothes. When a girl's in trouble, she goes to the gang for protection or revenge. Sometimes the girl will join in an open robbery. They'll do anything, including the 'five poisons' [he went on to name more than five]—stealing, gambling, fighting, whoring, gangsterism, kidnapping, swindling, blackmailing, etc."

Little Peng did not belong to a "real gang," partly because of Rule No. 2. He was not willing to follow orders, without thought of consequences for his family. "Because family was still our first concern. The real gangs would do anything. But we'd calculate carefully what to do, what we shouldn't do, and what we were incapable of doing. Sometimes real gangs would come over and say, 'We've got a plan. And we invite you to join.' As for that, we made a point of never joining. If some gang mistreated us or even one of us—say, a gang of ten members—we could easily organize a group of around ten on the spot with old grievances against this gang. And we'd fight until we won. Then the losers would have to give us gifts. Sometimes they'd even express admiration and ask us to join their gang. But we'd always turn them down."

Loss of face for the family was clearly a greater deterrent to outright petty crime than fear of punishment. "At the most such criminals get no more than three months," Little Peng pointed out in another context. And, "if they behave well when caught, they're just ordered to write a letter of self-examination." He contrasted this leniency with the severe penalty for political crime: "The slightest *hint* of a political deviation is enough to give you two years!"

The bonding force of Little Peng's gang was friendship. "Our saying is," he said, "At home, rely on parents. But outside, rely on friends." He had definite ideas on the subject:

"There are two kinds of friends—casual friends and friends of the heart. The first kind, at most, you invite home for a bite to eat or you give a cigarette to. But for a friend of the heart, you go out of the way to help solve his problems. You take the initiative to say—you have this problem? Let me help you with it....A friend like that you never can make in a short time. Sometimes you can't always tell. Wine-and-meat [fair-weather] friends are quick to see your power and advantages and they lean on you. But once they get power on their own, they're quick to dump you."

"Good friends are like brothers," he summed up. "You just don't sell them out." His first true friend was a junior middle-school classmate who came unasked to his aid, when he was being trounced by two boys in a fight. "My gratitude to this person was overwhelming. I regarded his courage and generosity as a very rare thing."

The basic "rule" of Little Peng's gang was: "Never put up with mistreatment," or translated into Americanese: "Never take anything from anybody." "Suppose my friend and I are walking down the street," he said, "just the two of us, and we run into four of 'them' who make some lousy remarks or jostle us or throw stones and pebbles at us. We'd fight back. The idea is to show your spirit—to show you'll never stand for mistreatment."

There was, in fact, nothing negative or "preventive" about this rule. It was rather a challenge and a provocation, for, as Little Peng confessed about young people like him back home, "they *long* for an incident. They seek expression through such fighting." The true purpose of the gang was the excitement of war on Monotony Street.

A battle could be sparked anywhere, but beginning last year (1977) a major trouble site in Little Peng's hometown was the movie theater. Members of different gangs were attracted there by films from Albania, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, shown for the first time since the fall of the "Gang of Four" and the easing of the ban on foreign films. "Yugoslavian love stories are really vivid," Little Peng explained. "One movie I saw was called *The Bridge*—it was an antifascist film. Of course, all these movies have a little love story in them. They're already censored [in China], but what little is left is enough to drive the audience wild. And then there were some movies with exciting trapeze artists....I guess if a western [European or American] movie got there, it wouldn't even have to have a nude scene to make people even wilder. I'll bet the audience will rush up front and try to climb up the screen!"

"You went to the movies at the risk of your life," Little Peng said. "Parents were always warning their kids not even to go near one....The authorities are so stupid. If they increased the number of showing times, there'd be much less trouble....The theater was small and the number of tickets was limited. Fighting was taking place all the time around there. One gang member goes up to another and says, 'Have you got a ticket?' The other says, 'No.' The first one says, 'Let me search.' The other refuses. So, wham—out comes a fist! Then, wham—another fist back. A great fight can get started like this."

Little Peng himself was once involved in a fight when he went with a friend to see a movie: "There were four of them there [in front of the theater] standing around smoking. They flicked their cigarette butts at us. We said, 'What did you do that for?' They said, 'We did it because we think you're great stuff. If we didn't think so, we'd stick the butts right into your mouths.' This was, of course, a matter of human self-respect. The two of us got into a terrific fight with them. It so happened two others of our gang

were nearby and came to our aid. We fought so hard that one of them got a bloodied head and another had his foot hurt so badly he couldn't walk. One of us got a sprained wrist. It was a desperate battle! We used everything we could lay our hands on—sticks, rocks, knives. It got so fierce that onlookers called the police—but we scattered before they came....If they made an investigation, it led nowhere...."

"The authorities," scoffed Little Peng, "have absolutely no control."

It was through such fights, some accidental and others prearranged, that "great fighters" rose to fame—those "who fought under any conditions—even four people at a time—and who didn't bother with second-rate fighters." Prearranged fights always involved the use of deadly weapons, because (as Little Peng put it) "fists alone are not enough for venting your hatred." Serious injuries and even death might follow.

Sometimes, internal injuries were incurred which remained "undetected" until years later. Little Peng and his friends were told this once by a famous fighter who was now much older and openly regretted his fighting days. "You may not feel anything when you're sixteen to nineteen," he told them, "maybe even through the age of twenty-three. But when you're twenty-five or even later, you feel the symptoms....I could have used my fighting days to learn a skill or a trade—to learn something," he added. He was giving advice—the sort that Little Peng and his friends would never have tolerated from their parents or anybody else. But the "famous man" had earned the right to a respectful audience.

"It made sense," Little Peng accorded, but he was plainly unmoved. The old become practical when the fun's over. If fate had not whisked him suddenly and finally out of the Chinese context, he would even now be walking cocksure down some street looking for trouble. His friends still are. □

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Seymour Martin Lipset

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## Presidential Greatness in the Age of Carter

There has been a tide of concern in recent years over the "imperial presidency," yet in fact it is the weakness of the American presidency today that is indisputable. This is not to say that the image of the imperial presidency is wrong, or that what gave rise to it has disappeared. It was, and remains, a valid conception. The number of people working directly for the White House has steadily grown—even though every recent president has promised to cut down the size of the executive branch. This is as true of Jimmy Carter as it was of his predecessors.\* As a system the presidency, or the government, has become an all-powerful institution. But the main consequence of bigness is differentiation, and that means that the chief executive, as an individual, loses much of his ability to control the government. Presidents coming into office, including Jimmy Carter, have not usually appreciated this. Most assume that because they are smart they will know how to control. After a while they realize that this is impossible.

Trying to deal with differentiation led to the basic problems of the Nixon presidency. To a considerable degree, of course, the isolation of the Oval Office was a function of Nixon's personality,

his passion for privacy, and his suspicion that the bureaucrats were trying to do him in, as in fact many were. But independent of personality, to control a large and differentiated government means that the president has to be isolated from many people who have good reason to see him. As FDR noted about a much smaller presidency in 1939: "It has become physically impossible for one man to see so many persons, to receive reports directly from them and to attempt to advise them on their own problems...."

Given these developments, it is curious that Jimmy Carter, alone among modern presidents, has tried to operate without a chief of staff—someone with authority to control the flow of information and to influence his personal agenda. Carter's White House is organized, not in hierarchical fashion, but rather like "the spokes of a wheel," with different aides having equal rights of access. Carter is his own chief of staff. According to Richard Cheney, Gerald Ford's chief of staff, this procedure cannot work: "Somebody has to be in charge. Without an orderly structure, there's no accountability, no orderly flow. You always run the risk of being blind-sided." James Howe, Jr., an adviser to Roosevelt and other Democratic presidents, agrees: "Carter's doing an

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\* According to Don Bonafede, writing in the March 4, 1978 *National Journal*, the Executive Office of the President has grown "since the beginning of the Carter administration." As this article goes to press, the President is trying to get authorization from Congress to increase sizeably the number of highly-paid senior assistants in the White House.

awful lot of stuff he shouldn't be doing. He must be exhausting himself on things that aren't that important."

The president obviously cannot react to all the memoranda he receives from the myriad of government departments. Moreover, the cabinet members, though appointed by the president, actually become the spokesmen for their departments. Joseph Califano heads Health, Education and Welfare, which is larger than many national governments. Like other ministers, he winds up representing his department to the president. What the president needs, therefore, is a staff loyal to him which will oversee the departments. The White House staff, or the Executive Office, thus becomes a second cabinet composed of the president's people.

When Richard Nixon first took office he held a televised press conference to introduce his cabinet members. He emphasized his campaign commitments to an open administration, to regular cabinet meetings, and to a cabinet that would function as a body and possess real authority. We now know what actually happened—the enhanced power of the White House staff of Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and the conflicts over authority and control. Nixon did not want independent cabinet members.

Nor does Jimmy Carter, who repeated this entire Nixon episode. He introduced his cabinet members to the public and announced he would have a truly collegial cabinet whose members would have broad authority. But the truth about cabinet authority can be found in the story of John Dunlop, a man widely rumored in the press to be a candidate for Secretary of Labor.

Dunlop was not appointed Secretary, despite strong backing from the AFL-CIO. According to newspaper reports, Dunlop was rejected because he was considered weak on affirmative action, and various black and women's groups publicly opposed him. But Dunlop himself explained what really happened:

Carter never intended to appoint me. He said he always meant to appoint Ray Marshall. I believe him. The reason is fairly simple. Look at the cabinet. They all have one thing in common that does not characterize me. Not one of them has a constituency of his own and I do.

That is, Dunlop had close ties to the labor movement. Had he been appointed Secretary of Labor, he would have had the AFL-CIO behind him; and if a fight between him and the president had developed, and Dunlop threatened to resign, as he had done in the Ford administration, that would have meant a conflict not just with Dunlop, but with the labor movement as well.

Cyrus Vance, Michael Blumenthal, and the rest of the cabinet do not have constituencies either. Carter appointed people he can fire tomorrow if they disagree with him, knowing that no one will make a fuss about it. The one exception to this is Andrew Young, who does have a constituency in the black civil-rights movement. If Carter were to remove Young as UN Ambassador there would be an outcry from blacks. But Young is not in an area of direct concern to his constituency. So it seems that Carter deliberately planned to have, not an independent, but a weak cabinet over which the White House staff could exert influence and power. Carter wants to be a strong president, and that requires that the White House, rather than the cabinet and departments, be the center of policy.

Franklin Roosevelt tried to increase his ability to make effective decisions by including in his government people with diverse approaches to the same area. Recognizing that different values and interests produced different "solutions," he made a habit of assigning the same problem to people or agencies with varying biases on the assumption that they would disagree and submit alternative policies to him. Other presidents followed the same strategy. Under Nixon and Ford, Fred Iklé, the head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, frequently disagreed with Henry Kissinger over arms control. On one occasion, Iklé complained to Ford about agreements reached by Kissinger with the Russians, and the President overruled the Secretary of State.

Jimmy Carter, however, by believing there is a "correct" solution to every problem, by relying on "experts," and by insisting that he make all decisions himself, has reduced his options and made himself a servant of his subordinates. In foreign policy and defense his experts largely come from one ideological camp—New

Politics, McGovern liberals and members of past administrations who have publicly recanted their role in the Vietnam war. In the Transition Task Force which they dominated they recommended each other. As a result, the State Department under Carter and Vance is more openly politicized than in previous administrations. Foreign Service Officer Neal Boyer noted in a (leaked) confidential memorandum that "of the 36 most senior positions in this department, 22 are filled by political appointees, as compared with only 12 in the last administration." McGovern himself has said that State Department appointments have been "excellent...quite close to those I would have made myself." The effect of having drawn almost all foreign-policy experts from one ideological camp can be seen in Carter's Middle East policy. All those concerned with the Middle East share the viewpoint outlined by Zbigniew Brzezinski in a series of articles published in 1974 and 1976. The prominent members of the Democratic Party who disagree with it have been excluded from discussions in both the National Security Council and the State Department.

The prevalence of New Politics supporters in foreign-policy and arms-control posts, people who are convinced that a mutually advantageous accommodation with the Soviet Union is possible, increasingly worries America's allies in Western Europe and Japan, who see Russian armament policies and maneuvers in the Middle East and Africa as evidence that Soviet expansionism continues. Commitment to withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea has led conservative Japanese politicians to feel they may have to come to a closer accommodation with their Communist neighbors. According to Flora Lewis, writing in the *New York Times* of April 1, 1978, European leaders express "uneasiness and bewilderment" over Carter's foreign policy. In France, not surprisingly, the conservative *Le Figaro* wrote some time ago of its concern over the influence of left-oriented "progressistes" on American policy in Europe. But recently, according to Miss Lewis, a "surprising attack came in a front-page article in *Le Monde*, a [left-oriented] newspaper that had long been sharply critical of what it considered over-assertive American 'superpower' attitudes around the world. Now, it said, Washington is failing to protect Western interests, especially in the Horn of Africa, but also in East-West relations generally."

Unlike Franklin Roosevelt, who welcomed conflict and tension within his administration and who gave the various segments of his coalition the sense that their representatives were part of the government, Jimmy Carter sees harmony as a virtue. When asked by Saul Pett of the *New York Times* what was his "greatest single satisfaction with the job so far," he replied that it was creating a "harmonious and highly efficient team." The way in which Carter's most important domestic program, his energy package, was put together reveals his preoccupation with expertise and harmony. According to the *New York Times*, "the plan was conceived in secrecy by technicians" and "reflected a detached, almost apolitical attitude." Those involved "functioned as if they were a self-contained unit and their task as hush-hush as the Manhattan project." It is hardly surprising, therefore, that those who disagree with Carter's energy plan have felt compelled to wage bitter campaigns against it in the Congress.

As with the State Department, Carter's domestic administration contains a large number of McGovernites—many of whom even backed Fred Harris or Morris Udall for the nomination in 1976—while almost no one who supported Henry Jackson holds a major position. In the October 1977 issue of *Fortune*, Juan Cameron wrote that "a great many of the sub-Cabinet-level positions have been given to a diverse array of public-interest lawyers, consumerists, civil-rights workers, and environmental advocates." Cameron argues that even though Carter may not have known the ideological backgrounds of any of these individuals, and did not directly appoint most of them, they were hired because they exhibit the political tendencies and approaches to government that he personally likes. As an anti-establishment outsider, Carter prefers others similar to himself. In Cameron's words, "There is no question that a curious affinity exists between the Georgian's traditional populism and the leftist thinking of the public-interest people who surround him."

Carter's reliance on New Politics types does not contradict his dependence on experts, or his concern with finding the correct "solutions" to problems. Indeed, he recruits his experts among New Politics academics and public-interest lawyers. In so doing he follows in the footsteps of Richard Nixon, who also depended on lawyers, albeit corporate ones, and professors. Under both Nixon and Ford, although nobody seems to have noticed, there was professor Kissinger at National Security and State; professor Schultz at Treasury; professor Schlesinger at CIA and Defense; Dean Butz, former professor, at Agriculture; professor Moynihan in Domestic Affairs; professor Levi in the Attorney General's office; professor Dunlop at Labor; professor Mathews at HEW; and professor Burns at the Federal Reserve. Nothing was more wrong with that television serial based on the Nixon administration, "Washington Behind Closed Doors," than the statement of President Monkton, "Don't hire anyone from Harvard," a statement Nixon actually made. Nixon's administration was full of people from Harvard and other Ivy League schools; and he appointed academics, not because as a group they were Republicans or conservatives, or because he had a constituency in academe, but because they were experts.

Carter has done the same thing, although his cabinet does contain more people with Washington bureaucratic experience than either Nixon's or Ford's. His professors are concentrated more at the subcabinet level. Still, there are many academics at the head of Carter departments: Brzezinski in National Security, Brown in Defense, Marshall in Labor, Schlesinger in Energy, and Kreps in Commerce. Patricia Harris, Secretary of HUD, has taught at Howard University Law School, serving briefly as Dean. Treasury Secretary Blumenthal is a businessman, but he is a businessman with a Ph.D., a former professor who does not have strong ties to the business community. He resembles Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson, another ex-professor businessman who retained close connections to the academic world.

The Carter administration is also composed of outsiders. Except for Brzezinski, and very recently Strauss, the top echelon in the White House is all Georgian. As such, Georgians are no better or worse than Kennedy's Boston Irish mafia or Nixon's California mafia, but a Georgian background is inherently more provincial. The people who entered the White House with Carter knew each other well in Georgia and stayed together throughout the long campaign. Of course, being at the summit they have been able to meet everybody in Washington and thus become more cosmopolitan; but they still remain a clique and basically rely on each other for information and ideas.

Carter consciously balanced this provincial-outsider White House by appointing many Washington insiders to the cabinet, something which shocked his Georgian populist collaborators. It should be recalled that Hamilton Jordan had said, "if you find Vance and Brzezinski in this administration, you'll know we did something wrong"—but they and others like them were appointed. Jordan and his friends are there to manage them, to give the President his options, to protect him against the departments.

Carter's conception of government is avowedly populist. As a populist he thinks little of interest groups whom he believes to be incorrigibly selfish. Labor defends labor, business defends business; the government, however, should represent all

the people. What is wrong with this view is that it is basically apolitical and undemocratic. Populists fail to recognize that democracy is inherently pluralistic; that it is based on conflict among interests; that coalitions among diverse interest groups are the stuff of politics; and that there is no common interest other than that which emerges out of the struggles, compromises, and deals.

In his rejection of interests, Carter resembles the unlamented former politician John Lindsay. When Lindsay became Mayor of New York, he announced that he would not deal with the "power brokers." He said he represented the people, and would not negotiate private deals with the unions. On January 1, 1966, the day he took office, the unions went on strike. Lindsay was broken by them, and capitulated to them more than the wheelers and dealers had. Robert Wagner, his predecessor, had negotiated better contracts from the city's point of view by making covert agreements.

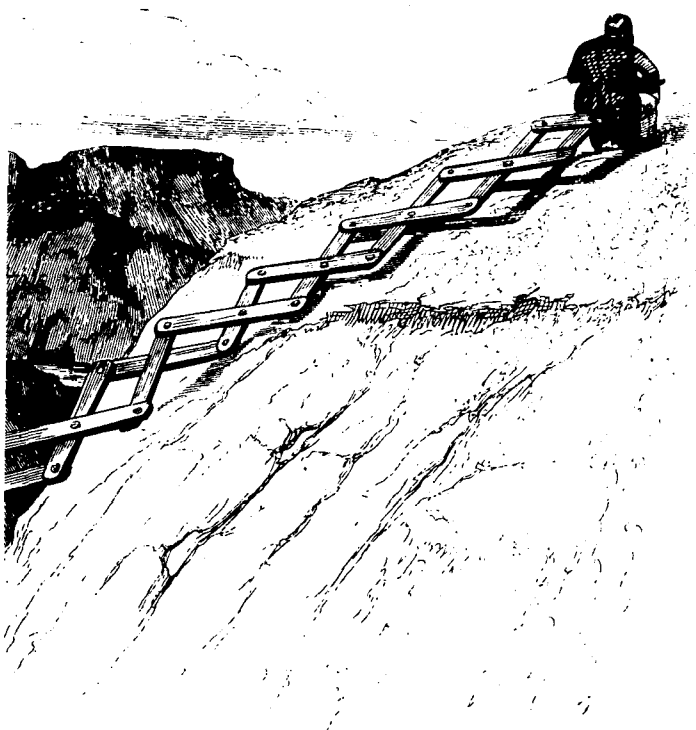
When Carter took office, he too was determined not to deal with interest groups. He would represent the interests of the people. But what happened? The interests revealed their power. When

they demonstrated anger at being ignored, Carter quickly backtracked—he could hardly do otherwise. Like Nixon, he had been elected by a narrow electoral college majority, and thus had to begin work on his reelection campaign the day he entered office. But to be re-elected he must have the votes, and in particular he must not alienate the constituencies that elected him.

Thus, a pattern of standing on high principle and then giving way emerged in the first fifteen months of the Carter presidency. He refused to deal with the AFL-CIO for some time, and the AFL-CIO became publicly angry with him. George Meany voiced regret for having worked so hard for Carter in 1976, threatened not to do the same in 1980—and had his way. Carter did a sudden turnabout and began to espouse positions

on minimum-wage and trade-union-rights legislation which the union movement advocated.

Similar events occurred with respect to the Middle East. Carter and Brzezinski undertook a policy of pressing Israel to compromise, to yield on crucial issues (such as the demands of the Palestinians) which Israel believed detrimental to its security interests. Pressure by the U.S. on Israel has repeatedly created conflict between Carter and pro-Israel groups, particularly the Jews but others as well, most of whom have been traditional Democrats. When they attacked the administration, the White House backed down. After one such confrontation in July 1977, Carter held a meeting with the presidents of major Jewish organizations at which he said that, unlike his predecessor, he would never pressure Israel by threatening to withhold aid, that the U.S. and Israel may disagree, but such disagreements are among close friends. In October, following public outrage against the joint U.S.-Soviet statement calling on Israel to recognize "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians," Carter caved in again. He told a group of pro-Israeli congressmen that he would sooner commit "political suicide" than endanger Israel's security. Following Sadat's initiatives, Carter has finally challenged the Begin government's tough territorial line, presumably in the hope that the coalition regime, which includes a number of "doves," will break up. If it does not, it remains to be seen whether Carter will resist the pressures on him to modify his stand.



This pattern of public confrontation and retreat under fire has reduced Carter's credibility among participants in the disputes at home, and among our friends and enemies abroad. Carter has become increasingly subject to criticism which is strikingly similar to the kind that was directed at John Lindsay. *Newsweek* reported: "The complaint is commonplace in Washington that Carter, far from being the stiff-necked purist of Georgia legend, bends too easily under pressure." An article in the *New York Times* commented: "Once perceived as being 'too stubborn,' Mr. Carter is now seen by many as a man prone to retreat too quickly." And the *Economist* noted that the behavior of the White House has "made our conclusion of a year ago seem almost embarrassingly prophetic: 'Mr. Carter has shown an alarmingly visceral streak when under pressure.'" Like Lindsay, Carter has turned out to be more vulnerable to interest-group pressure than politicians who recognize from the start that they must negotiate with the interests if they are to maintain an effective coalition.

The weakness of the Carter presidency may be due largely to certain basic trends in democratic politics, specifically, the fact that welfare states are exposed to steadily increasing demands from growing numbers of well-organized interest groups, outside of and within the government.

As Steven Roberts has written in the *New York Times*: "Citizens say they want Government off their backs, but they welcome Federal benefits.... These demands on the Federal Government have been compounded by the enormous growth of special interest groups, which often concentrate on one issue: equality or the

environment, birth control or gun control, prayer in schools or money in campaigns, saving the whales or saving the family." And David Broder has stressed the inability of the Carter administration to stand up to the pressure exerted from inside government. He noted that the "new" urban program made public on March 25, 1978, the product of an interdepartmental task force assigned the job a year earlier of getting rid of programs which did not work, "proved mainly to be a device for protecting every program of every agency represented.... None of the 160 recommendations call for eliminating any single existing federal program—despite the almost universal acknowledgment that some of them are real losers!"

The capacity of politicians and governments to satisfy the often contradictory demands of these external constituencies and internal bureaucracies has declined. As various publics have been educated to demand more from their governors, those in office find it impossible to deal with them. New York City broke down financially. On a larger scale, the U.S. government faces the same dilemma. Those at the summit, mayors or presidents, are blamed for these failures and, not surprisingly, their popularity goes down. Ironically, the very growth of government makes them appear weak and ineffective. Writing in the *Washington Post*, David Broder has emphasized that Carter's experience "tells you a great deal, not only about the inability of this President to achieve his goals, but about the inherent frustrations of a governmental process so big and complex as to overwhelm almost anyone." □

Anne Crutcher

## The Feminine Mistake

A hundred years ago, feminism was wanting to vote, to go to college, to earn a living at a profession other than the oldest. It was wanting to own property and to decide whom to marry without asking Papa. Clear-cut, and rather humble, goals.

Fifty years ago, a few people were beginning to understand that it was a little more complicated than it looked. Women's handicaps were subtler and more pervasive than the most militant had supposed. Women's real desires were more mixed than the most self-aware quite knew.

But 40 years ago, it was possible to see it all spelled out, complete with nuances, by a woman who knew how to transcend feminine disadvantage as well as how to identify it. By that time, Virginia Woolf had written both "A Room of One's Own" and "Three Guineas," the first in 1929 and the second in 1938. Between them, these two essays sum up just about everything 20th-century women are up against in trying to express themselves as human beings with intellectual as well as emotional dimensions and with legitimate ambitions to have a hand in running their world.

Virginia Woolf faced all the embarrassing questions. To answer the one about why so few female geniuses, she replied by introducing Shakespeare's sister. A hypothetical girl just like him in brains, energy, imagination—everything except sex. What would have happened?

He had little education; she would have had less. She would have been home learning to bake and brew while he was out talking to soldiers, travellers, tavern trulls, and courtiers. If she ran away to London to go on the stage as he did, either rape or passion

would have made her pregnant at 16. What then would there have been for her but to hang herself?

It is an image that still conveys.

So does the image of the inviolate room of one's own. Virginia Woolf was very clear about the way intellectual achievement requires privilege. A place to be alone, and somebody else doing the housework.

In "Three Guineas," she took on the Victorian proposition that women don't need to earn money because they share so fully in the resources of the men in their lives. Coolly, she pointed out the obvious: that when sharing is a matter of largesse, it doesn't assume very large proportions. She compared figures on the money going into exclusively male causes and interests and the money going into projects women might share. The conclusion had to be that the woman's share was her pearls and dresses.

Meanwhile, there was the matter of "Arthur's Education Fund." In even the most prosperous Victorian households, nobody thought of investing in higher education for Arthur's sisters. For all the brilliant effects of her self-education, this Victorian daughter always resented missing the university training her brothers got. Furthermore, she was as aware as any affirmative-action purist that Oxbridge and its American equivalents give their customers more than book-learning. There was always the honing of mind on mind within a self-confident elite. There was the building of the old-boy network so the elite could take care of its own and keep the outsiders out.

She understood the connections between successful functioning, power, and self-respect. She saw how keeping women out of the professions and the more desirable economic activities denied them these elements of fulfilled humanity.

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At the same time, Virginia Woolf differed from most latter-day feminists in understanding equally well the positive side of women's deprivations. She saw how privilege gets fat and goes slack even as it is being corrupted by the brutalities of competition within its own ranks.

Superb insights all. The pity was that everybody forgot them for 25 years.

Those were the years when Freud was running things. If women were edgy, it was because they were violating their deepest natures by "rejecting the female role" in favor of competition with men. *Modern Women, The Lost Sex* was a popular book in the 1940s. It was essentially a keep-them-barefoot-and-pregnant book, although it granted the possibility of careers in the "nurturing" professions such as medicine, education, and social work. Engineering, no. From there it was a short step to the attacks on "Mom"—works using psychoanalytic jargon to prove all social ills and personal problems were women's fault for raising their sons wrong.

History had collaborated with Freud to set women up for this. There was World War II, followed by the rush to the suburbs. Women had enjoyed their wartime experience in factories and offices but they were as eager as the men who came home to them to start raising lawns and babies in split-levels of their own.

Part of the impulse was a bottled-up longing for the consumer goods that hadn't been around during the war. People of both sexes wanted furniture and candlesticks and washing machines and cars. They wanted to forget K rations and Spam by giving little dinner parties where a splash of vermouth could turn canned mushroom soup into a French sauce.

It had the primordial force of birds flying south in the winter.

And then Betty Friedan discovered that it was a capitalist plot to sell diamond engagement rings and detergents that were bad for the environment.

Betty Friedan was your standard, mid-20th-century American liberal housewife, every gene programmed for protest. If it wasn't opening a second front, it was banning the bomb. If it wasn't doing away with the poll tax, it was lowering the price of hamburger.

She was bourgeois enough to marry and put a good deal of Jewish-mother intensity into polishing the kitchen floor and driving the children to their music lessons. She was humanist enough to feel that if she wasn't perfectly happy, something or somebody must be to blame. And she was Marxist enough to pin it on capitalism, which, if you recall your mythology, invented patriarchy and destroyed the sexual egalitarianism of the primal horde.

Betty Friedan's book summing up these perceptions, *The Feminine Mystique*, came out in 1963, when the pendulum was ready to swing. The leftist forces were gearing up for the civil-rights movement and the rediscovery of poverty but not yet ready to institutionalize Bohemia, as they were to do later when Dr. Spock's babies started letting their hair grow. Betty Friedan's revolt against child-pampering, carpooling, house-proud suburbia roused a strain of radicalism that went beyond politics.

By the time she started NOW in 1966, the sexual revolution was in sufficiently full swing to take a new women's movement in

directions that would have dismayed Susan B. Anthony. It threatened to make Betty Friedan the Kerensky of feminism, bypassed by a new breed of women whose all-encompassing grievances made her complaints about housework and not being on the Supreme Court sound like polite murmurs.

It was the hour of the Kate Millets and Germaine Greers—angry, humorless women who put their considerable brains and education at the service of man-hating hysterias. Some were lesbians, some castrating heterosexuals, a few even exponents of a sour chastity.

That was not what Betty Friedan had in mind. It has always been easy to make fun of her as a divorced middle-aged woman who would have trouble winning a beauty contest even against Bella Abzug. But she has always retained a certain heterosexual wholesomeness and clearly knows more about the joys of sexuality than any number of Gloria Steinems and Jill Johnsons. In spite of her surrender on the gay issue at the last women's conference, she is essentially a Fabian reformer rather than a kill-or-cure Jacobin.

However, the sad truth is that the American feminism of the last five years has taken more from its crazies than from her. Feminist writing in the recent past has taken new forms, making its case through poetry and the novel, history, biography, and literary criticism as well as straightforward tracts and pop-psych advice books. Scarcely any of it is any good.

Even where there is—and sometimes there is—education, scholarship, and literary skill, the final package is marred by paranoid psychology, a conspiratorial view of history, crassness, and a refusal to face the either/or aspects of the human condition.

Today's feminist writing features the kind of sentimentality that dignifies severe neurosis and irresponsibility into social protest. It loves to combine gross confessionalism with claims of being "a very private person." It commits blasphemies against the real potentialities of feminine nature. The way it gloats over victimization would have Dr. Freud nodding with satisfaction about how right he was when he said all women

were masochists. Its hedonism is the short-fuse kind, very quick to take out after individuals, "the system," or God any time the fun isn't fun anymore.

It would make Mary Wollstonecraft blush. Or Virginia Woolf. Or any genuinely self-realizing woman.

The examples are everywhere. Linda Gordon's book, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: A Social History of Birth Control in America*, interlards fascinating history with Marxist-feminist rationalization. The author's problem is that women have won so much of what they asked for in the sexual sphere. If they're still not happy, it's because "Those in power can turn women's goals against them."

Now that women have been delivered from marriage and the rest, there they are alone in the singles bar. But that too can be explained. "In all social movements, every gain by the exploited has been manipulated and coopted by the rulers." It seems the one-night stands of the uncommitted have that aftertaste because capitalism has "commoditized" sex.

The poets are all in a funk, those who haven't already killed themselves. "By the time we reach middle life, we've all been



deserted and robbed," says Carolyn Kizer in an anthology called *I Hear My Sisters Saying*.

This book, put together by Carol Koneck and Dorothy Walters, also includes such expressions of female sensibility as these lines by Mary Gordon: "Mite, maggot, ovum, sperm, what are you? My neat trick, my sweet genesis. Unbearable. Unborn."

"Life after life after life goes by without poetry, without seemliness, without love," mourns Denise Levertov. Or how about Virginia Gilbert's "I hope you realize I need your terrible good-byes. It gives me something to look forward to."

The most repulsive of the poets is the one who recently came out with a bit of prose on motherhood: Adrienne Rich, the intelligent, educated, talented, successful, and prosperous author of *Of Woman Born*.

She had three children and they made her miserable as well as happy. Her book is a supreme example of contemporary feminism as childish rebellion against the fact that every known human situation, let alone relationship, is charged with tension and ambivalence. As every parent knows, children are annoying, time-consuming, anxiety-provoking, and disappointing as well as infinitely beautiful, lovable, and fulfilling. Sensible people think that's just the way it is; you have to take the bitter with the better, as Jane Ace used to say. Or you can skip them both.

This is what Adrienne Rich resents most. Sure, she didn't have to have children. But she might have missed something. And people might have called her childless.

It's all men's fault for inventing the forceps and being rapists and gynecologists and husbands who expect their socks to be washed. In infinitely sophisticated language, she goes through the whole catalogue of women's wrongs from the beginning when men spoiled the prehistoric golden age by inventing patriarchy. There will be another golden age, though, when motherhood as we know it has receded into anthropology.

The real avatar of this sort of feminism, however, is Erica Jong, poet, novelist, and career sensualist. Like Adrienne Rich, she is a talented writer. Like Adrienne Rich, she is given to presenting as tragedies the inevitable disappointments of those who want contradictory things at the same time.

In her two highly successful novels, *Fear of Flying* and *How to Save Your Own Life*, she is never more than an alias away from autobiography. Erica Jong, Manhattan Jewish poet, who writes a sexy novel about Isadora Wing, Manhattan Jewish poet, who writes a sexy novel about Candida Wong, Manhattan... Anyway, each of these beings is married to a Chinese psychiatrist, gets famous, discovers feminism, gets divorced, and so on to the young boyfriend who, for at least Erica and Isadora, spells happy ending. As an example of self-pitying weakness glorified, this drama is the greatest thing since the last Victorian injustice-collector raised her neurasthenia to the status of a higher sensibility.

Erica-Isadora-Candida is a pathologically scared person—afraid not only of flying but of being like her family, of not being like her family, of failing, of succeeding, of having a baby, and of being alone in a hotel room for half an hour. Her sexuality owes a good deal of its force and direction to her anxiety-proneness. Sexual pleasure is, after all, the ultimate reassurance, the ultimate sense of well-being. What more could anybody ask? There's an answer

to that question: to have it with none of the responsibilities of a relationship. The "zipless f--k."

This graceless term identifies Erica Jong's concept of the sexual encounter with a stranger. Isolated, clean of memories and expectations. No past, no tomorrow. With someone you don't know and will never see again, there are none of the distracting, emotion-sapping emotions of a relationship where resentments, fears, and dependency can impede the flow of feeling.

Yes indeed, but she finds she still needs the husband to hold on to. Naturally, she feels aggrieved because his hurt tolerance of her infidelity makes her feel guilty, which is uncomfortable.

That was *Flying*. In her second book, Erica Jong becomes more explicitly feminist about blaming merely human problems on what "the system" lets men do to women.

"All women think they're ugly," she says with an air of discovery, "even the prettiest ones"—the feminist cliché about "body loathing" as something unique to women. Nobody who has read Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, or seen a man with a bald spot comb his hair, should fall for that one. For every woman who thinks her breasts are too small, there's a man who thinks he's too small somewhere else.

And then there's the one about women's need to be "nice."

This is the feminist appropriation of a problem that hits writers regardless of gender. Men may not be expected to be "nice," but for them the same issues come up quite as often. The violated confidence, the cruel portrait of a friend, a lover, a parent, a home town... many a male writer regrets not being able to go home again.

Feminist self-justification reaches a peak in *How to Save Your Own Life* when the author moves from old-fashioned recriminations against the Chinese husband—not tender, won't talk to her—to trendy ones—he was a detour she would not have taken but for the conditioning society forces on females. You know, the seemingly strong authority figure to be outgrown along with

unnatural dependency needs. In idealizing the brute selfishness of a woman discarding a man she has used but doesn't need anymore, Erica Jong's heroine idealizes another exemplar of emotional parasitism. An Anne Sexton figure: the suicide whose self-destructiveness is somehow a matter of nobility and wisdom.

Psychoanalytic types used to say that all writers were either voyeurs or exhibitionists. We know where Erica Jong fits. Now that she has been liberated from fear of self-exposure, sexploitation doesn't worry her any more than highbrow disdain for the TV hype. Of photographs of herself unzipping flies, she says only "Wouldn't you rather sell six million copies than be tasteful and not read?"

The hollowness of the sexuality behind such appeals to the porn crowd comes out in the extreme fear and distaste the *Flying* heroine has for babies. She is, Isadora says, the only one of her friends who never had an abortion. That's how careful she is never to get pregnant. The real Erica Jong, past 35, became pregnant only recently. A poem explains: "I fear the barnacle which might latch on and not let go...so I keep my womb empty and full of possibilities." So much for robust sensuality.

The pity is that all too many people think the only alternative to this sort of thing is Marabel Morgan and *Total Woman*. But there's still Midge Decter. We may see women vindicated as full human beings yet. □



## Power and the Twentieth Century

We must get rid of the clutter. Our minds are hampered by terms that no longer have much meaning. This occurs during the passing of an age, when people must change their minds about many things. This is not easy. Tocqueville, for example, wrote nearly one hundred and fifty years ago that "a new science of politics is necessary for a new world." This new science has not been forthcoming. Our political terms, basic ones such as "Right" and "Left," "Conservative" and "Liberal," etc., are at least one hundred and fifty years old. They are still widely used—and, consequently, thought—even though they have become increasingly devoid of reality.

Increasingly: but not absolutely. This is our problem, which is the historical one: *Non omnis moriar*. In certain instances these words are still applicable, in spite of their diminished meanings. In other instances their shortcomings are more and more obvious; but even then their accustomed antonyms, the accepted alternatives, will not do. The terms of the dialogue no longer apply. The recognition that Hitler was not really a man of the Right does not mean that he was a man of the Left; the recognition that Stalin was not a Marxist does not quite mean that he was an anti-Marxist. Nor can we any longer find a "solution" by sorting out "Rightist" and "Leftist" elements in their acts or in their thinking. *No longer*: because we live in a time which is post-conservative and post-liberal and post-Marxist and probably even post-political.

The telling prefixes are not *pro-* or *anti-*. They are, more than often, *pre-* or *post-*. They are not logical. They are historical.

### I

We must not mistake vocabulary for thought. The purpose of this article is not the proposition of a new political terminology; it is descriptive, not corrective. Inherent in historical, as distinct from modern social-scientific, thinking is the recognition that problems are rarely "solved" but that they are outgrown. This truism has not yet been applied by the practitioners of modern political science.

More than one hundred years ago—around 1870, an important milestone to which I shall have to return—the conservative-liberal antithesis lost much of its meaning, for the simple reason (the reason was simple, even though its consequences were complex) that both sides were adopting more and more of each other's policies and attitudes: The conservatives were becoming increasingly liberal, while the liberals were becoming increasingly conservative. By 1900 there were few true conservatives left; indeed, the remaining conservatives were, more than often, a handful of old-fashioned liberals. The "problem" of conservative vs. liberal was not being "solved"; it was being "outgrown." But the most important development was something quite different from this evolution through which the older conservative-liberal antithesis lost its recognizable edges. After 1870 new political phenomena appeared. They were nationalism and socialism—massive phenomena which were less and less explainable within the old categories. They were becoming the principal political realities, at least for the hundred years.

At the time of this writing, when the twentieth century is almost four-fifths over, we can recognize some of the features of its land-

scape. Its principal political configuration is that of national socialism. Every one of the more than one hundred states of the globe is, in one way or another, a welfare state. Mussolini, Hitler, Mao, Stalin, Castro, Perón, Brezhnev, Nehru, etc., were, or are, national socialists in one way or another. The Soviet Union, Britain, France, Japan, China are national socialist states. They differ in their mix, but the essential and overwhelming elements of the dual compound remain. The universality of this phenomenon is such that it is also applicable to the United States, where the differences between so-called conservatives and so-called liberals, or between so-called Republicans and so-called Democrats, may be summed up by stating that while the former of these pairs have been, generally speaking, more nationalistic than socialistic, the latter have been, more than often, socialistic rather than nationalistic.

Let us glance again at the historical landscape of the twentieth century. The two great mountain ranges dominating this century were the two world wars. This century, contrary to accepted ideas, has not been a very revolutionary one. Even the Russian revolution was the result of the First World War: the very contrary to the French or the American revolutions two centuries ago, which had caused world wars, and not the other way around. This is but one of the many examples where Marx was proven wrong. The main events in the world of the last one hundred years were wars, not revolutions: the struggles of nations, not the struggles of classes. International socialism, notwithstanding its theoretical pretensions, has amounted to little. International socialists have amounted to little. International Communists have amounted to little. Even international capitalism (another myth) has amounted to little, all of the talk about multinational corporations notwithstanding. Near the end of the twentieth century the mass of Americans, the mass of Russians, the mass of Frenchmen, the mass of Chinese are as American or as Russian or as French or as Chinese as one hundred years ago; perhaps even more so.

### II

Let us take yet another look at the landscape of this century. We must come to terms with the phenomenon inadequately called "Fascism."

We have been accustomed to look at the twentieth century, as if it were marked by the contest of the two tremendous forces of Capitalism vs. Communism (or call it Democracy vs. Communism, if you wish). This is all wrong, for many reasons: and one of them is the historical existence of "Fascism."

For twenty-five years during the second quarter of this century (more precisely, from about 1920 to 1945) the world struggle developed between three great historical forces, not two. Of these three great forces the one called—I repeat, inadequately—"Fascism" was the most dynamic one, at least for a while. Eventually the world forces of Democracy and Communism were forced to combine in order to defeat it.

This was perhaps the most extraordinary fact in the history of the twentieth century, just as Adolf Hitler was the most extraordinary person on its scene. This is not a moral judgment. It is, simply, a recognition that the only yardstick we have for measuring the historical impact of certain events and of certain men is by their consequences: and Hitler changed the course of

John Lukacs' latest book is 1945: Year Zero.

this century to a greater extent than had anyone else. On the other hand Hitler, too, notwithstanding the extraordinary nature of his career, belonged to the development of his times. Like Napoleon or Cromwell or Genghis Khan, he had not come out from nowhere. He represented some of the characteristics (many of the worst ones) of his race and his people—as well as the principal historical tendencies of his era. He was a National Socialist, of a German-Austrian kind.

He was not a Fascist. ("Fascism," he once said, "is only a half-job.") Mussolini invented Fascism. Hitler had not invented national socialism, not even its peculiarly German-Austrian variety; when he had decided to enter politics, he joined one of the many already existing German National Socialist parties. It was Marxist and leftist propaganda which, beginning as early as 1931-1932, put the label "Fascist" on Hitler, on German National Socialism, indeed on all kinds of dictatorships and regimes of an authoritarian kind. This promiscuous and indiscriminate usage of the "fascist" adjective thereafter spread rapidly across the world, accepted—rather thoughtlessly—by all kinds of people. This obscured the main issue, the essential nature of national socialism, including its German National Socialist variant, a semantic development which accorded with Stalin's wish to obscure the fact that his regime, too, had become a national—and not an international—socialist dictatorship of a certain kind.

Mussolini had experienced his conversion already in 1914, when he recognized the great failure of international socialism: He was an Italian first, and a socialist second. Stalin's conversion was more gradual, less conscious, and also less honest, intellectually speaking: But all of this did not change the essential issue. By the time of the Second World War Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin were the three principal dictators in Eurasia, the three principal figures on the world historical scene, each of them national socialists of a kind. Both Mussolini and Stalin—the first, Hitler's eventual ally, because he felt so constrained; the second, Hitler's eventual enemy, because he followed his natural inclinations—ended up imitating, and adopting, many of the features of Hitler's National Socialist regime, including some of its anti-Semitism.

In sum, while Fascism was a particularly Italian invention, National Socialism was a particularly extreme and horrid German variant of a more universal phenomenon. We ought, consequently, distinguish not only Fascism from National Socialism but also Hitler's National Socialism from the more universal phenomenon of national socialism that remains the dominant political reality in the world, having survived both Mussolini and Hitler.

### III

Having mightily contributed to the defeat of Mussolini and Hitler, the United States after 1945 found that it was confronted with the ever more disagreeable ambitions of its erstwhile ally, Stalin. This development contributed to further misunderstandings or, rather, to the kind of obscurantism that politicians and intellectuals are inclined to propagate.

Like Hitler and Mussolini, Stalin was a dictator. He ruled over what was called a totalitarian state. People now thought that the final confrontation of the twentieth century was taking shape, between the United States and the Soviet Union, the first representing Capitalism, the second Communism. Another version of this prospect was that the United States, representing Democracy, now had to confront the Soviet Union because of the latter's capacity as the prime representative of Totalitarianism. Yet, just as the Soviet Union had long ceased to be a classic Communist state, the United States had long ceased to be a classic Capitalist state. Successive thinkers found it now profitable to proclaim the fact of their convergence: that eventually Capitalism and Communism would become more and more alike, borrowing more and more from each other, whereof the *détente* of the United States and the Soviet Union would be but the inevitable consequence.

There was a little more truth in this than in the above-mentioned lucubrations, but still not very much. When we consider the evolution of the Soviet Union and of the United States during the last twenty-five years, we must recognize certain truths, even

though they may be unpleasant. Total tyranny, like total democracy, has proven to be a myth. Like Tsarist Russia (where, in spite of the disagreeable principles proclaimed by the regime, all kinds of odd liberties managed to exist) the Soviet Union is not a total dictatorship—in spite, rather than because, of its political regime. Democracy, in spite of the persistent advocacies of many of its proponents for extending unlimited license to degenerates, criminals, and subversives of all kinds, has become more and more restrictive of personal freedom. During the last twenty-five years life in the Soviet Union has become more tolerable, while life in the United States has become less tolerable. If this is the kind of convergence that promises good things for the future, allow me to say, in the proverbial words of the worldly-wise American child, that it is spinach, and the hell with it.

### IV

Stalin and Hitler and Mao Tse-tung belong to the past. We live in a post-totalitarian era, which is perhaps—but only perhaps—to the good. Let me explain what I mean.

The history of the German and of the Russian slave and concentration and extermination camps is full of meaning, but not always of the kind that is usually attributed to them.

At first sight these camps showed a reversion to a brutal primitive society, consisting of two kinds of people: absolute masters ruling absolute slaves. There was, however, a rising middle class, the significance of which grows ever sharper in retrospect. In the German camps these middle people were the so-called "Kapos": killers and thieves rising from the ranks of the prisoners who then would lord it over the rest. As in the German, in the Russian camps the "common"—or perhaps we should say "uncommon"—criminals, convicts, murderers, and thieves were, and are, privileged compared to the other prisoners. But the privileged state of this third class was not the result of political or ideological preferences. It grew naturally, from the very conditions of society. The administrators of the prison camps needed accomplices among their victims. The most natural of such accomplices were the criminals: because they were tough, and because they were utterly devoid of any conviction above the impulses of savagery, that is, above the law of the jungle. And it was precisely because of this savage condition, of a kind of brutal opportunism, that the Kapos were the natural allies of the Germans, and that the criminals are the natural allies of the Soviet administrators.

In the Russian system they are almost a state within a state. All of Solzhenitsyn's works are preoccupied with their existence. They have their rules, their turf, and their own language, much more extensive than the jargon of criminals in the West. There are many reasons to believe that this underworld within the Soviet Union is enormous, nearer to the surface of power than we may think, and that in the event of a breakdown of the state this underworld, rather than some kind of a political opposition, may flood the surface of that vast country.

In sum, the criminals are *increasingly* powerful; and their masters are *increasingly* dependent on them. This is an extremely significant development, worth our attention: for prisons, like schools, reflect the conditions of their societies at large. The society in which the influence of the criminal element increases is a post-ideological society. When Hitler and Mussolini came in, common criminality decreased. Fascism was a dictatorship that promised a rigorous system of law and order, which was the principal reason why the Italian people, at a time of threatening anarchy, accepted Mussolini as their leader; the same thing was true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the Germans and Hitler.

In the history of the twentieth century significant examples of such post-ideological societies exist, and not only in the prison camps of Nazi Germany or of Soviet Russia. Let us look at what was happening in the Third Reich during the last year of the war (when it was already a post-Fascist state); and at what has been happening in the Soviet Union since Stalin (a country which, at the cost of little imprecision, could be called a post-Communist state); and even at certain developments within the government of the United States (a post-liberal state) in the 1970s.

In the Third Reich, especially after the collapse of the anti-Hitler conspiracy in 1944, the most powerful organization was the SS. From a small array of Hitler's bodyguards the SS had grown into a state within the state. Presided over by Himmler, it had its own army, its own tank divisions, its own police force, its own national and international intelligence organizations, its prison camps. Yet by 1944 Himmler, as well as some of his cohorts, was no longer a convinced follower of Hitler's National Socialist ideology. He tried (and often succeeded) in establishing contacts with Hitler's enemies, including American intelligence organs and even Jewish international organizations. He considered himself as Hitler's potential successor. He thought that the opponents of Hitler's Reich would have to deal with him. He was no longer hampered by ideology; he was interested in power.

In the Soviet Union, beginning with Stalin's great purges in the 1930s, the convinced Communists of the ruling class were being replaced with police bureaucrats of the state apparatus, a development that has continued to this day.

In the United States a man such as Richard Nixon, who made his political career largely because of his reputation as an anti-Communist, eventually found it very easy to get along with men such as Brezhnev or Mao: not because he had acquired a more moderate view of ideologies but because he recognized the congenial character of his counterparts, powerful bureaucrats at the pinnacle of their respective states. Like Himmler or Brezhnev, Nixon progressed from ideological politics to police-power politics. Like a Vyshinsky or a Schellenberg, his minions, men such as Haldeman or Erlichman, had become Important Persons to whose thinking ideological attributes no longer applied: They were neither conservatives nor right-wingers, whatever their political inclinations in their earlier careers may have been. Their overriding interest—this is probably true of some of Carter's people, too—was not money or political ideology but the maintaining and the extending of their power. What was and remains ominous in the Nixon misdeeds was not so much the petty criminality of the Watergate business but the fact that behind this grim clinging to power looms the ominous and increasing shadow (consider but Nixon's dependence on the Teamsters) of the powerful criminal.

What this means is that in the 1970s we have reached a turning-point, comparable in importance to the other great turning-point in the 1870s which I earlier attempted to describe.

In the first place—in order, though not necessarily in importance—all of the ideological frenzies of the 1960s and all of the double-talk about Eurocommunism notwithstanding, we live in a post-ideological era. Like Fascism and anti-Fascism, Communism and anti-Communism no longer mean very much. The post-ideological era has come: As certain wags, including this writer, suggested decades ago, all the political Isms are now Wasms.

In the second place, the dominant political configuration of this world continues to be a compound of nationalism and socialism; but it is because of its universality that this phenomenon is beginning to lose its meaning—just as one hundred years ago conservatism and liberalism had begun to lose their meanings because of their increasingly amorphous characteristics.

In the third place—in order, but probably first in importance—we live in a transitory situation. The Soviet Union is no more a prototype of the Communist, or Totalitarian, state than is the United States a prototype of the Capitalist, or Democratic, state. In reality, both of them are prototypes of a new combination of bureaucratic and police states. In the Soviet Union the bureaucracy is dependent on the police. In the United States the police is dependent on the bureaucracy. This is an essential difference: but we ought not take too much comfort from it.

In both societies the police (including the state security police organizations) have been increasingly involved with criminals. The danger that the rising power of the latter implies may be as great as the earlier dangers of lawlessness represented by totalitarian fanatics. The breakdown of the traditional political state is wrought with all kinds of dangers; and, just as the Dark Ages preceded the Middle Ages, these dangers may precede the emergence of a new kind of feudalism which I often think that the distant future may bring. □

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Antonio Martino

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## Making Democracy Unsafe for Italy

The *Brigate Rosse*, the terrorists who on March 16 mixed business (Aldo Moro's kidnapping) with pleasure (the slaughter of his escort), might not be—as some people claim—the tip of the iceberg, the vanguard of a wide underground revolutionary movement, but they still are politically significant.\*

The kidnapping took place on the very day the new government—based on an alliance between the Christian Democrats (DC) and the Communists (PCI), the first of its kind since 1947—was supposed to present itself to Parliament for a vote of confidence. As soon as the news came out, the Communist-controlled unions proclaimed a general strike. The timing of this decision was disquieting. That morning I was lecturing at the University of Naples. My lecture ended at 11:15, and the students, who had been sitting in the classroom since 10:00, reported the story to me. "Moro has been kidnapped, the escort killed, a general strike proclaimed, and

a mass meeting organized in Rome, piazza S. Giovanni, at 5 p.m. today." Moro had been kidnapped between 9 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. The students had heard of it at 9:30, and—together with the news of the kidnapping—Italy was notified of the unions' decision to strike and to organize the rally.

Why a general strike? The standard answer given to this question by Communists and "non-Communists" alike was that the general strike and the mass meeting were "the people's response to terrorism," that the event proved that "it was time to be united," to show that "the country gave a united response, involving all democratic forces."

All of a sudden, by contrasting the mad and absurd behavior of the terrorists with the "responsible" attitude of the Communists, the miracle had been performed: Who could now question the democratic nature of the PCI? Who could be so callous as to deny that the Communists, being different from the terrorists, were a

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\* For nearly two months, the Italian government refused to negotiate with the terrorists. Moro was found dead on May 9.

"law and order" party? Who could be so blind as not to see that, in time of "emergency" like the present, the country needed a strong popular government, one that could gather the largest support possible? All of a sudden the Communists ceased to be an "anti-system" party—they are on our side in the fight against terrorism! Those who opposed the alliance between the DC and PCI—the tiny but prestigious Liberal Party and a large number of Christian Democrats—were silenced. By virtue of an agreement between "democratic" parties, the new government received the vote of confidence that afternoon with no debate in Parliament. A debate—so the argument went—would have been a waste of time, and the country needed a new government as soon as possible, so that effective measures could be taken against terrorism.

It should not be forgotten that the alliance was highly unpopular, both among DC members not resigned to give up anti-Communism, and among PCI rank-and-file who considered the compromise with a bourgeois party heretical. The act of terrorism made them both swallow the *fait accompli*.

To add insult to injury, the Communists suggested—and most commentators agreed—that the *Brigate Rosse* had chosen to kidnap Moro because he had supported the alliance between Communists and Catholics, and that, therefore, the terrorists were fighting against the Communist Party's way to power, trying to stop the "irresistible rise of the popular masses." In short, they were "objectively" anti-Communist. This was explicitly stated by Bufalini, a Communist leader, at the Party's Central Committee meeting on April 17. Bufalini even went so far as to say that since the purpose of the terrorists is to destroy the alliance between Catholics and Communists, it would not be surprising if "foreign influences" (meaning the CIA) were behind them. But the most remarkable statement in his speech was the assertion that, after Moro's kidnapping, the country could not go back to the "old normality" (i.e., PCI in opposition).

Few people could deny that Moro's kidnapping provided a very timely help to the PCI. By silencing dissenters, it sped up the formation of the government. The country has accepted the idea of Communist partnership in government as the natural and logical solution to the "crisis." No one dares to question the democratic nature of the PCI anymore, given its strong commitment to fighting terrorism. Only a biased and hysterical anti-Communist could continue to deny that Italian Communists are of a different breed, that they have changed for the better, and that, together with spaghetti and Neapolitan songs, they are a typical product of our country—something we should be proud of.

That the *Brigate Rosse* are Communists, and not—as the Communists would make us believe—CIA agents intent on sabotaging the "irresistible rise of the popular masses," has been convincingly shown by Rossana Rossanda in an article in the newspaper *Il Manifesto*. Rossanda, who had been a distinguished member of the PCI until she was expelled a few years ago and joined the ultra-Communist group centered around *Il Manifesto*, reminds us of the fact that the "logic" and the language of the terrorists are identical to those of the PCI in the 1950s. Far from being anti-Communists in disguise, the terrorists are the natural offspring of Leninism.

Be that as it may, the main point is that the BR is an asset in the PCI's strategy for the conquest of power, and attempts to deny this fail to be credible.

There are three ways by which the Communists could take over Italy. The first, the traditional one, is sanctioned by the constitution of the Italian Communist Party adopted on January 21, 1921, at the time of the Party's founding. Article 1.3 of that suddenly-forgotten document reads: "The proletariat can neither shatter nor modify the capitalistic system of production relations, from which arises its exploitation, without the violent overthrow of bourgeois power." (It is worth noting that this is essentially what the BR is saying today and with the same terminology.) However, as is obvious to anyone familiar with the nature of the Italian people, the revolutionary way to power would have no chance whatsoever of succeeding in Italy. Besides, no matter how weak the state is today, it is still much too strong for amateur revolutionaries accustomed to the good life capitalism has granted them.

The second way to power would be an electoral victory. If the PCI were—as many self-defined progressive intellectuals want us to believe—a democratic party, this is the way it would choose. No other strategy is consistent with democracy. But that would be a slow and uncertain road for the PCI to take. Its electoral gains, although steady, have been very gradual—it has taken them 30 years to go from 19 percent (1946) of the popular vote to 34.4 percent (1976).<sup>\*</sup> At this pace, power would not go to Enrico Berlinguer but to his grandchildren. And there is no guarantee that the trend will continue indefinitely. Above all, aiming at an electoral victory would leave room for an opposition that might be large and effective. Opposition is something the Communists don't believe in, and, for this reason, they have always scorned the "51-percent strategy."

The third way is the "historic compromise," an alliance with the Catholics, that would simultaneously bring them to power and silence all opposition: The PCI and DC today poll over 73 percent of the vote. If one adds the minor parties that belong to the coalition, the "unholy alliance" leaves less than 10 percent to the opposition. Could anyone think of a more favorable situation for the Communists?

Given all this, the BR is doing the Communists a great favor. By giving them a chance to condemn terrorism and political violence, the BR is making the PCI appear to be part of the establishment, and thereby acceptable to the majority of the people. By creating a sense of uncertainty and "emergency," the Communists make their inclusion in the government seem like a necessity, and anti-Communism outmoded.

No one can confidently say whether the KGB is behind the terrorists, as the Chinese Communists (and James Reston of the *New York Times*) claim, or if they are puppets in the hands of Peking, as the Russians say. It may well be that they are not imported, that there is no international conspiracy behind them. But one thing is clear enough—they are Communist, and their action is speeding up the Communist conquest of power in Italy. □

<sup>\*</sup> In local elections held May 14-15, 1978, the week after Moro's body was found, the PCI won only 27 percent of the vote.



## From Munich to Mogadishu

What surprises us most about recent West German terrorism is its apparent senselessness. We can rationalize away the terrorism of Algerians trying to free their country from foreign rule, of Latin Americans eager to end military dictatorships, and of blacks in South Africa or Rhodesia fighting the racist regimes that rule their lives. But what about the Baader-Meinhof gang and its several successors? Do they really believe that fascism rules the land, that kidnappings and killings will bring the German people to their side and the government to its knees?

No, the chances for such a success are slight. And yet terrorism persists. Threats and manifestoes are intermingled with bombings, armed robberies (thought to have netted at least \$8 million already), and, more recently, murders. The latest major incident was the kidnapping last September of Hanns Martin Schleyer, president of the German Association of Manufacturers. The story is well known by now. For 43 days Germans and the world waited in suspense while the West German government dickered with the Red Army Faction that had seized Schleyer, Palestinian confederates hijacked a Lufthansa flight with 91 persons aboard, a crack unit of the German Border Police stormed the Boeing 737 at Mogadishu, killing three of the four hijackers, several German terrorists evidently committed suicide in their prison cells (leaving evidence, concluded to be spurious by officials, which suggested that state assassins had killed them), and, finally, the RAF "executed" Schleyer.

The Schleyer affair seemed to tie West Germany into knots. It was the main topic on most people's minds. As for the government, while the police conducted an intensive search for Schleyer and his kidnappers, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt formed a non-partisan "crisis staff" of leading officials and opposition leaders which met upon demand, around the clock if necessary, to deal with the ever-changing situation, and played down any governmental activities that seemed to imply that his government was spending less than 24 hours a day trying to secure Schleyer's release. Meanwhile, the political parties worked out legislative proposals designed to ease both the current crisis and the threat of future terrorism.

Although terrorism itself is what most worries Germans, as indicated by a public opinion poll conducted at the year's end, it is the popular and official reaction to terrorism that has concerned thoughtful observers within and without the Federal Republic. Was governmental activity in fact crippled by the crisis? Did it push the German government into the kind of authoritarian reaction that might eventually coalesce liberals and the left into a popular front of resistance? Both were certainly among the terrorists' goals.

The first question can be disposed of quickly. Although the government spent an extraordinary amount of time and money in dealing with the crisis, it by no means exhausted its capacity to govern. Hardest hit, perhaps, was Chancellor Schmidt himself, who was on virtually 24-hour duty throughout the six weeks. For him it was a political risk as well. If he had appeared weak in

dealing with Schleyer's kidnappers, or if the Mogadishu venture had gone awry, his political career might well have ended right then and there. But events did not turn out this way. To be sure, Schleyer was killed, but doubtless most citizens, the overwhelming majority of whom subsequently applauded Schmidt's actions, were resigned to that likelihood anyway. Schmidt's popularity was never greater than after the dramatic success at Mogadishu.

It is nonetheless questionable how many more such crises the Federal Republic, or indeed any government, can survive. The express hope last fall was that a hard line *vis-à-vis* the terrorists would discourage such groups in the future. In the meantime redoubled efforts might put behind bars a few more of the more dangerous individuals. It would be wishful thinking to imagine that things will actually work out this way. To the contrary, the current crop of terrorists appears sufficiently dedicated and, with support from a small but willing circle of sympathizers, even self-confident to strike again in the not-too-distant future. The question becomes one of how well prepared the Federal Republic will be to respond appropriately.

Each new act of terrorism has strengthened the demand for more rigorous controls and even basic changes within West Germany—precisely the sort of response that raises the hackles of civil libertarians at home and abroad. Whether Germans like it or not, they are still carrying the burden of their Nazi past. This is not to say that Nazism itself is a live issue or even a remote prospect. It isn't. More to the point is that responsible politicians and intellectuals approach very cautiously any measure smacking of the arbitrary authoritarianism of the past; and others are quick to jump at perceived encroachments upon personal freedoms, usually in a "here-we-go-again" tone. Voices in the Soviet bloc have harped so long on the supposedly imminent threat of neo-Nazism that few pay attention anymore. What West Germans cannot understand, however, is that their ostensible allies in the West seem just as anxious upon the slightest of occasions to sound a clarion call against the putative neo-Nazi danger.

A case in point is the "decree on radicals" (*Radikalerlass*) of 1972. German civil servants have long enjoyed special prerogatives, including job security, economic privileges, and substantial pension rights upon retirement. The price has been, *inter alia*, legal provisions requiring them actively to support the state in the fulfillment of its tasks. In principle, at least, those not doing so can be fired. Just cause might be participation in radical movements which, although not illegal themselves, are seen as contrary to the best interests of the state. In January 1972, a conference of minister-presidents of the various states or *Bundesländer* met to develop uniform guidelines for the application of this principle.

The decree explicating these uniform guidelines to prevent radicals from entering public service has caused no end of troubles for the Federal Republic. For one thing, the German civil service includes many who would not be thus classified in other countries—school teachers, locomotive engineers, nurses in public hospitals, and others. While outsiders can understand that a state does not want to employ radicals in sensitive positions, they often find it difficult to see how a nurse in West Berlin who has passed out literature for a legal Communist party is endangering state

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security. For another thing, it is not easy to define those behaviors which are contrary to the state's best interests. For some review boards, mere membership in a radical group or participation in a protest march is sufficient; others demand concrete evidence of deleterious behavior before they will bar a person from the civil service.

The *Radikalerlass* has contributed mightily to a political climate that encourages suspicion about the government's intent. Large segments of the intellectual left in Germany and of the press abroad have termed it a prohibition against the exercise of one's profession (*Berufsverbot*) by one whose views diverge from the "official" line. In principle, of course, the teacher who is denied a job in a public school can turn to a private one; in actual fact, however, such a person lost his job at a private school in 1976, when a court ruled that the receipt by the school of some public funds made its employees subject to the same conditions obtaining for public-school teachers. The proliferation of such cases has turned the question of *Berufsverbot* into a major issue—one which cannot be hidden by official denials, retaliation against public servants who dare to use the term, and cries from President Walter Scheel that the phrase is slanderous.

The Schleyer affair elicited a spate of still more questionable proposals for policy. One is a law which, during a period when people's freedom or lives are at stake (e.g., while they are being held by politically-motivated kidnappers or hijackers), prohibits contact between those in prison as suspected or convicted terrorists and their lawyers (*Kontaktsperregesetz*). The Justice Ministry must seek court approval within 14 days after applying this statute, and renewed approval every 30 days. Although some politicians had sought such a law for years, it came only after Schleyer's kidnapping, when Attorney General Rebmann's order prohibiting such contacts came under fire from the courts. It took but five days to move the bill from a first draft to promulgation—a near record in the Federal Republic.

Why was such a law deemed necessary? In the Federal Republic, lawyers have fairly free access to their imprisoned clients. There is no one present in the room where they meet, and no partition separates them. It came as a shock to officials and the German public alike when some of the terrorists' lawyers were charged with violating the trust placed in them by smuggling weapons and explosives into the prisons and by carrying out the imprisoned leaders' messages to their confederates regarding the conduct of further terrorist activities. The new law aimed at preventing such abuses, at least during times of extreme crisis.

Although passed in parliament with only a handful of dissenting votes, the *Kontaktsperregesetz* has had an unsettling effect on many others, not all of them in liberal circles. This is not only because of a suspicion that the circumstances in and haste with which it was enacted were not conducive to legislative wisdom. Lawyers were especially critical. It was enough for many simply to point to the case of Eleonore Pönsgen, arrested in July 1977 for suspected complicity in the murder of Jürgen Ponto, director of one of West Germany's three main banks. Only fast action by her lawyer, after consultation with the suspect, was able to turn up witnesses who had seen her on a bus at the same time that the murder had occurred a substantial distance away. Had a similar situation occurred after Schleyer's kidnapping, the suspect would have had much difficulty establishing his innocence. More generally, lawyers, supported by large segments of the liberal press, argue that the violation of professional ethics by a few of their colleagues does not warrant an abridgment of the traditional right of the rest to speak freely with their imprisoned clients.

Yet from the government's perspective, there were few real alternatives, none of them likely to be as effective in hindering terrorism. The Christian Democratic opposition (and especially its Bavarian partner, the Christian Social Union) has long called for more direct controls over communications between lawyers and clients accused of being terrorists. But could a court-appointed official, even one not directly involved in the case, sit in on such discussions without violating the principle of confidentiality? Even if this were possible, would such a person be able to

understand coded language used by the participants? Having the official act as a go-between would pose similar problems, in addition to overburdening the judicial personnel should there be many visits. The most generally accepted step, the installation of glass partitions, would stop the exchange of forbidden objects but not illegal exchanges of information. The Social Democratic-Liberal coalition under Schmidt has rejected all these ideas as inappropriate—but it has also been sufficiently sensitive to complaints about the *Kontaktsperregesetz* to publish a detailed report comparing the practices of other West European states in similar situations, a report which reveals the Federal Republic to be one of the most liberal among them.

Other proposals of the CDU/CSU opposition have gone even further in proposing controls to limit terrorism. The most far-reaching of these entails a form of preventive detention for convicted terrorists who have already served their term in prison. The principle is well established in German law. A person thrice convicted for serious crimes is not automatically released when the third prison term is over. A judicial body must review the case. If it feels that there is a danger that the individual, if set free, would commit another such act, then it may order the person's detention in prison until a subsequent review, two or three years later.

The CDU/CSU opposition would apply this "notorious criminals" provision to terrorists after their *first* conviction. The reason is simply that many of those associated with terrorist groups have, upon completing their prison sentence, merely raised their clenched fists and returned immediately to the underground. Lengthening prison terms for terrorists, another proposal often heard, would put them out of action for a longer but specified stretch. The CDU/CSU's measure, by contrast, would keep them there for an undetermined length of time—until either the leopards had changed their spots or the threat of terrorism no longer existed. (Catch 22: If we assume that at some future time, say, 1985, the terrorist threat is over, the release of all those in preventive detention might merely lead to their regrouping and starting a new wave of terror; therefore...)

Given the plethora of even more radical proposals—ranging from introducing the death sentence to the creation of a terrorist-hunting commando unit free from bureaucratic controls (a suggestion of Alfred Dregger, chairman of Hesse's CDU), reprisals against imprisoned terrorists should new acts of terrorism occur, and the suggestion (later retracted) by Lower Saxony's minister-president, Ernst Albrecht, that torture be permissible in extreme cases—the overall impression that the outsider gains is that Schmidt's government has not responded hysterically to last fall's crisis. Its suggestions for new legislation are restricted rather to marginal changes aimed at assisting the police in their work. These include increasing the resources, especially manpower, at their disposal, but also permitting spot-checks of automobiles (now allowed only to look for defective equipment or invalid drivers' licenses), introducing nonfalsifiable license plates, permitting search warrants for entire apartment complexes, improving communications procedures among the police of the *Bundesländer*, and requiring that people register when they stay overnight in hotels or even at friends' homes.

The danger lies elsewhere than in the government's intentions. There is the steadily increasing CDU/CSU pressure for more rigorous measures against terrorism—measures which, by placing state security far above personal freedoms, may play directly into the terrorists' hands. The opposition's representatives are wont to point out that, had such ideas been adopted five years ago, there would be no terrorist threat today. What gives these proposals life is the fact that Schmidt's coalition governs by the slim majority of eight seats in the Bundestag. Second, the conservative press, especially that controlled by Axel Caesar Springer, has been conducting its own journalistic terror campaign against left-wing intellectuals, some of whom have on occasion taken stances that make them appear to be sympathizers of the RAF and similar groups. A favorite target has been the Nobel Laureate, Heinrich Böll. For his part, Böll has not been deterred from frequent polemics slashing away at what he sees as authori-

tarian tendencies in present-day West Germany. Third, what its opponents term the *Berufsverbot* is simply not disappearing as an issue that arouses the left—particularly students, who are already facing the prospect of unemployment when their studies are over. One can point out that in West Berlin, where anti-government feelings have run highest, 34 of 12,486 applications for civil service positions were turned down in 1977—a figure that officials consider insignificant but which critics view as dangerously large. Finally, the possibility cannot be ignored that new terrorist outrages would leave the government little alternative but to yield to popular demands for draconic countermeasures.

Although there is at this point little likelihood that the Federal Republic will succumb to any of these dangers—terrorism itself will push West Germany over the brink into reaction just as little as it will engender a leftist revolution—a climate of uncertainty persists. How, people ask themselves, can we stop terrorism once and for all? How seriously should we take charges that nonconformists are being persecuted for their political views? What should one make of the self-censorship exercised during the recent crisis by the media, which cancelled police shows that seemed too provocative and accepted governmental requests not to air videotapes provided by the terrorists? What can we do to make our allies abroad understand and cooperate in resolving the terrorist problems faced by West Germany?

Doubtless the greatest uncertainty concerns the future relationship between intellectuals and the rest of the country. Politicians are for the most part dedicated to the preservation of predictability

in public life and the promotion of an even higher standard of living, values shared by the population at large. In contrast, a certain anti-political bias and idolization of those who break society's rules in the pursuit of some absolute end have always characterized the German intellectual scene. This latter stance was bolstered by the lesson drawn by many from the Nazi experience: that the intellectual above all must be prepared to risk everything to defend the individual and the masses against state encroachments and demands for conformity. The reality is that the masses are not much interested in the kind of defense offered by intellectuals. What is more, they are inclined to see the latter as being largely responsible for kindling student unrest in the first place and then, through their excessive criticism of the Federal Republic, nurturing terrorism while proclaiming their innocence.

In a society in which intellectuals play a major role in setting the tone of political discourse, this conflict is highly significant. Central to it is the difficulty of, first, finding means of political expression that are not destructive of the social and political fabric and, second, learning to see critical views as not necessarily subversive. Historians will not find this a new conflict in German society. The problems of the last decade have nonetheless made it particularly acute; and terrorism has so heated the atmosphere as to render difficult any rational discourse on basic conflicts. The explosiveness of this atmosphere, if not defused, could lead to a serious breakdown of the political consensus that the Federal Republic has worked so hard to obtain. Therein lies the real danger to West Germany of the current wave of terrorism. □

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Eleanor Lansing Dulles

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## *The Historian as Gossip*

With its misleading assumptions, echoes from past fiction, and unverified anecdotes, Leonard Mosley's *Dulles*\* fails to qualify as history—even though it has been described as serious biography and “invaluable to an understanding of America in this century.”† The multiple defects of Mosley's book are not unique. They are symptomatic of the recent tendency to publish for the large number of curious people who do not wish to make an effort in reading history but who want sensation and relaxation. The aim is to capture the imagination of thousands and thereby enlarge the market for material which is by nature complex and often obscure.

One way to find out how careful a writer has been in preparing his text is to examine his sources. Mosley's twenty-page appendix, “Source Notes,” is revealing. At first glance it seems comprehensive, but on examination it proves to be unsubstantial and vague. There are frequent references to “sources close to the family,” “confidential sources,” “CIA documents,” “British intelligence sources,” “archives,” and other ill-defined points of origin. There are references to the “Allen Dulles papers” which, I am told by the librarians at Princeton, were not made available to Mosley. Parts of the oral history material at the Dulles Diplomatic Library at Princeton were given to Mosley to read subject to definite restrictions designed to protect the people interviewed and the eventual reader of the material. But because Mosley does not identify exact sources, and does not say what specific transcriptions of oral history he used for any particular fact, it is impossible

for the reader of his book to retrace the steps and judge the applicability of alleged quotations to the context in which they are found.

In order to determine when the quotations in Mosley's book were taken from recordings in face-to-face conversations, and when from oral histories taped by experts and always checked back to the person interviewed, I have made many inquiries. I have discovered that in the majority of cases, old and frozen conversations from the oral histories were used. These sources have the advantage of having been corrected by the speaker according to proper oral history standards. They have the disadvantage of having been made long before Mosley's text with its special thesis was outlined. Many of those whose words sound responsive to the author's questions never in fact met him and did not know of his proposed biography—they spoke in general terms and not in the context of the questions raised by Mosley. Distortion inevitably results.

In *Dulles*, the appearance of authority is accentuated by the author's listing dozens of people as primary sources, but the impression fades when questioning discloses that some of these people were not consulted. Moreover, there is what appears to be an adroit attempt to gain added credence by thanking certain people for assistance who actually did not have any interviews with Mosley.

The “Prologue” is especially interesting in this connection. For those who know the facts, it reveals the fictional approach of the book. But this difficulty is not evident to those who cannot check,

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\* *Dulles: A Biography of Eleanor, Allen, and John Foster Dulles and Their Family Network*, The Dial Press/James Wade, \$12.95.

† John K. Hutchens, *New York Times* advertisement.

so they assume the story is accurate. Four individuals are named as "responsible for the account"—along with others unnamed. None of the four was at the Christmas Eve party described. None of them told Mosley about it. There was indeed a small party but the conditions—Allen Dulles' illness and his wife Clover's concern—and events were not those described. The source is said to be interviews, but these interviews never took place.

Chapter one, "Cradle Marks," blows up a minor episode as psychologically important to Allen's character development and the relation between him and the other protagonists. The story could not originate, as Mosley claims, in "sources close to the family." Where it comes from is hard to imagine since it was not in the record. One must conclude that it came out of thin air. At best, it is a wild exaggeration of a long-past event—the successful operation on Allen's foot when he was a baby, forgotten by family and friends in a few weeks.

In the early chapters, the five children, their parents, and other relatives are displayed as representative middle-class characters like those in a soap opera—loving the outdoors, swimming, sailing, fishing, standing about by the lake, often in church, in small, New York State towns. They are described as somewhat sadistic, always competing with each other, and inordinately ambitious. Then, with their education well-advanced, the text exhibits the three main characters after 1914, reacting to the threat of World War I. This material is apparently from scraps of tape recordings.

There follows the parade of great figures at the Paris Peace Conference that produced the Treaty of Versailles. Wilson ill and in hiding, Colonel House maneuvering, Lansing sulking, the Dulleses living it up. All this is spicy reading, some from scattered oral history sources, but does not add one cubit to our understanding of the complex and disastrous international forces at work at the conference. It confuses those who know a little, disturbs those who know more.

Later chapters bring forward the negotiations over German reparation in the interwar years. There are familiar references but the historian is confounded by the roles assigned to Charles Evans Hughes, Charles G. Dawes, and Foster and Allen Dulles. There is also no discussion of Owen Young and his major contribution in the Young Plan. What help is this assortment of people and ideas to the perplexed person seeking to understand the sad story of the pre-Nazi years?

The narrative moves to the momentous question of isolationism and United States entry into World War II. Who thought *what* and *why* becomes unfathomable—a mix of retrospection, allegation, and imagination. Similarly, those who wish for a dependable account of Allen Dulles' intelligence activities in Bern—in 1917 and in the 1940s—must wait some years, since it has not yet been written. In any case, judgments as to Allen's "amateurish" methods and naivete (pp. 45, 48) are not convincing from an author who confuses Jan and Thomas Masaryk, and who implies that CIA personnel had views of events in Paris in 1919, 18 years before the organization was established (p. 61).

Mosley's bizarre account of Foster's return to the State Department in 1950—he had, of course, been associated with Truman and Acheson in connection with the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) meetings and as a delegate to the United Nations—is confused and biased (pp. 249-252). It was natural that Lucius Battle, a young man with no experience in politics, who did not know the key senators or Thomas Dewey or Dean Rusk, should have seen his own role as primary; with the zeal of youth he later wondered "whether I had given birth to a monster" by bringing John Foster Dulles into the State Department... (p. 259). Mosley, by relying heavily on Battle's account, underestimates both the wisdom of the President and the importance of having support in the Senate in these crucial months. Foster had told me that he was reluctant to go back to the State Department but that the President had said to him, in effect, "We can use you, though we realize you remain a Republican and when the elections are at hand you will want to resign and give us Hell." Unfortunately, Mosley fails to consider seriously the issues involved in bipartisanship and the art of getting broad political support for foreign policy.

Perhaps the most significant and pervasive distortion, which can be traced through a series of seemingly unimportant remarks, minor episodes, and major actions, is found in Mosley's account of Foster's attitude towards the Nazis, the Jews, and the German nation. The theme is too important to be handled fitfully, casually, and without careful examination of the record. Mosley seems to be aware of inconsistencies in his assertions but merely relates these to a prevailing sense of guilt over the mistakes in dealing with Germany in the 1920s.

These were matters which I discussed with Foster over a period of years beginning in 1919. They are also matters on which he had written clearly and succinctly in his book, *War or Peace* (pp. 132, 220-223), and in many speeches.

Concerning the Nazi persecution of Jews, Mosley asked me to clear a statement attributed to me (p. 90) but did not take my correction—which stated that in the mid-thirties Foster realized that the Jewish question was the major one. Foster's friends, Max Warburg and Carl Melchior, had told him of their apprehension. He closed his Berlin law office in 1934.

The record is also clear that Foster advocated a strong Germany in an integrated Europe, not a Germany "carved up" (p. 167). And it is noteworthy that Mosley fails to give a correct account of Foster's support for the Marshall Plan and NATO (p. 198).

In this running sketch of history many anecdotes are assembled. While not in themselves important, they are intended to explain the character of these three "ambitious," "powerful" individuals and to explain later views which are ascribed to them in connection with war and peace, Austria, Germany, France, Great Britain, and other nations. These episodes weave the tapestry against which are projected decisive policies and action. The errors of fact continue throughout the official lives of the trio. Corrections now are difficult because of the multiplicity of mistakes.

The thesis that there was a family "network" to run foreign policy presents much lively and often inconsistent detail certain to confuse the careful reader—though some who skip and skim may not worry. The family-network thesis implies the existence of a common view and functional relationships that would make it imperative to contribute to a common goal. It also suggests a conspiratorial attitude which does not survive long unnoticed in Washington.

In my early years in government I spent most of my time with liberal New Dealers; occupied with the development of the Social Security Program. Gradually, in the war years, I became increasingly involved in foreign policy and moved more toward the middle of the political spectrum. By the time Foster became Secretary of State, Allen was fully occupied with the responsibilities of guiding American intelligence. I was busy with clearly-defined tasks designed to strengthen Berlin. The various channels and methods of operation were all within an established framework. My contacts with the office of the Secretary of State were rare.

Neglect of the standards of responsible scholarship confronts the researcher who chooses to turn to this text. Indeed, the problems in this book run so deep that I believe it would be more acceptable if the "source notes" were omitted. Other, well-researched books on Dulles and Acheson by Michael A. Guhin, Gaddis Smith, David S. McLellan, and Louis L. Gerson—based on manuscripts at Princeton and, in most cases, oral histories—have date indications for sources so that one can check the authors' accounts against the primary material and arrive at solid judgments. When exact sources are not given, as with Mosley's book, the whole account becomes illusory, intangible, and without depth.

Oral history libraries provide rich mines for research which become more and more important; but they also present dangers which call for special precautions. In most cases the transcription is done by experts and submitted to the person interviewed for correction. The record of the more carefully conducted histories is reliable. The more casual taping of conversations by untrained writers is less dependable, particularly when the transcript is not checked by the person interviewed. If a transcript is not submitted for verification how can it be trusted as a source?

Perhaps the most likely cause of distortion is the temptation to fragment the interview. Bits and pieces of a coherent discussion are assembled as building blocks of a structure not anticipated by the interviewee and interviewer in the original exchange. Thus an author can tease opinions out of the transcript that are not representative of what the speaker actually believes or said.

Another consideration in relying on tape recordings to fill out history is that some people refuse to be taped and others rush to the recording machine with great alacrity. This introduces a bias which is difficult for the writer to discern. He may take the easiest course and fail to consult other persons who could give interesting insights. In the case of the Dulles Diplomatic Library, for instance, Foster's older son did not wish to contribute. As a result, at least in part, Mosley does not pick up the fact that John Dulles is a professor and writer on Latin America. Moreover, he did not "drop out of college"; and, in devotion to his parents, he established a permanent memorial to them at the University of Texas. Although I informed Mosley of these facts, he did not include them in his records, and so distorts this phase of family relations.

Moreover, it is worth noting that some people who give taped interviews make them concise and balanced. Others are stimulated by the experience and let their memories run away with them. Almost all, however, tend to tire and to wander after twenty or thirty minutes. They become speculative and even confused after the first fine effort and may make mistakes which they have no good chance to correct. There is rarely enough preparation for the interview or verification of the details of past events which are discussed. Recollections recorded tend to become facts.

A few practical conclusions can be derived from these observations. One is that the sessions of recordings should be broken into short segments. More important, those who use transcriptions of recordings should check them against sources wherever possible.

Third, quotations used as excerpts, or even as background, should be checked with the interviewee. The reason for this precaution is clear. In its absence, the repudiation of inaccurate quotations by those interviewed can only come after publication, as in the case of *Dulles*.

The use of tape recordings without checking has led to a rude encounter in the case of the biographies written by Leonard Mosley. His story moves swiftly from one episode to another. There is a wealth of anecdotes and a flood of emotions, feelings, conflicts, rivalries, and exposure of hidden—and never articulated—thought.

The conditions under which readers have had access to the papers of the oral history collection at Princeton are clearly set forth: "the reader (1) will not publish, quote, cite, or refer to any part of the papers without written permission from the Librarian of Princeton University or his deputy and (2) will submit to the Librarian prior to publication all quotations, citations, or references in the context of their intended publications."

In the preparation of *Dulles*, Mosley, I am informed, did not abide by those conditions. This breach of agreement raises serious

questions as to the future use of oral histories at Princeton and elsewhere. Sadly we note that the barn door can be closed, but the horse has been stolen.

Many people have said to me: "It must be as Mosley wrote it, since he taped your conversations." My answer is: "He says he has the tapes, but was the transcription accurate? Was the meaning of the statement as he has given it in the excerpt, or was the intent of the original conversation different? How can the reader judge it is a fair use of the whole conversation?"

Some who were quoted by Mosley without their knowledge (John W. Hanes, Jr., William B. Macomber, Roderic L. O'Connor) have raised eyebrows; Foster's son, Avery Dulles, has written of "dozens of errors." For my part, if Leonard Mosley had shown me the text of what he used, or a considerable part of it, I could not only have saved him from his many misspellings and minor, though still disturbing, mistakes, but have set right some of the background narrative.

The dilemma apparent in the growing use of tape recordings to enrich history raises the question of whether it is wise for scholars or public officials or family members to refuse to participate. My answer is "no," but the writer using the tapes should, as is often the case, be required by custodians to check back before quoting, even if the person interviewed does not make this a condition. If he is not, the compounding of error may continue.

These new biographies would be entertaining but we need the lessons of history, particularly the development of foreign policy, for in the years ahead there will be survival decisions. Since a proper understanding of policy is urgent, resort to the wax-museum type of history is questionable.

In Mosley's book, scores of prominent figures are on display; many of them he actually met. A few, but not all, of those he cites gave him their personal views. Faced with this exhibit of Foreign Policy, the scholar

has an obligation to identify this type of writing for what it is: entertainment, not, as some reviewers say, a genuine contribution to understanding the national past; popular, perhaps, but contribution to understanding, no.

What measures can be taken to further solid research and dependable history? Perhaps, if some of the foundations and benefactors of the arts and sciences set up a fund to guarantee the purchase of a stated number of books published by the non-commercial publishing houses, significant support would be at hand. Foundations could make books available to the hard-pressed colleges and libraries here and abroad—a special aspect of this program could be contributions to the developing nations. It might make possible expansion by the university and other quality presses without fear of bankruptcy.

Other measures could be devised, but money is definitely part of the reason even high-grade publishing houses do not publish sound history. Money is also the problem facing the hard-pressed scholar. Serious publishers should somehow be put on a more even footing with the commercial houses, some of which appeal to a sensation-hungry public.

The times call for more quality in history. □



## THE PUBLIC POLICY

by Marc F. Plattner



### Electoral College Reform: Benjamin Harrison Never Again

Although few Americans may be aware of it, the nation is currently in the midst of the latest in a long line of attempts to abolish the electoral college. Last year, with the support of President Carter, Senator Birch Bayh introduced a resolution that would amend the Constitution to provide for direct election of the President. That resolution passed the Senate Judiciary Committee by a narrow margin in September of 1977 and is expected to reach the Senate floor sometime this year.

Much of the impetus for the current effort at reform was provided by the close outcome of the 1976 presidential contest, in which a shift of about 8,000 votes to Gerald Ford in Ohio and Hawaii would have given him an electoral vote majority, despite Jimmy Carter's 1.7 million advantage in the popular vote. The main argument of proponents of direct election has been that such a reversal of the popular-vote verdict would cause consternation among the American people and severely weaken the legitimacy of a president elected under these circumstances.

Another danger in the present system is the possibility that a strong, regional third-party candidate may gain enough electoral votes to prevent either of the major-party candidates from winning an electoral college majority. In that event, the third-party candidate would be in a powerful bargaining position, whether the election were thrown into the House of Representatives or he chose to cut a prior deal in the electoral college itself. This of course was George Wallace's strategy in 1968. Although the attempt failed, the specter of another Wallace candidacy in 1972 spurred efforts at reform in the 91st Congress; a direct-election amendment passed the House by a substantial 338-70 margin in 1969, but

fell victim to a filibuster in the Senate.

Public opinion polls show that a large majority of the American people do not really understand the workings of the electoral college system and would favor a change to direct election. In addition, direct election has been endorsed by a wide range of interest groups (including the AFL-CIO, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the League of Women Voters, and the American Bar Association) and politicians (including Gerald Ford and Robert Dole, as well as President Carter and Vice-President Mondale). Yet many of America's most distinguished political scientists are opposed to direct election, fearing that it will bring certain consequences—largely unforeseen by its proponents—that would weaken the two-party system and the federal balance.

Most direct election proposals, including the Bayh Amendment, require that the leading candidate obtain at least 40 percent of the total popular vote in order to win the election; if no candidate receives that much, a runoff election is held between the two leading vote-getters. This provision is likely to offer an incentive to new minor parties to enter the presidential race in hopes of forcing a runoff and thereby extracting concessions from one of the leading candidates in exchange for support. The 40-percent threshold would also provide a greater incentive for "splinter" candidacies of major-party factions that lose (or choose not to contest) their party's nomination. Under the present system a splinter candidate would find it difficult to win many electoral votes, but under direct election he might realistically hope both to come in second in the popular vote and to prevent the winner from reaching the 40-percent threshold, and thereby have a chance for victory in the runoff.

Direct election would deprive the states of any formal role in presidential elections. It might consequently lead candidates to focus their campaigns on relatively undifferentiated national constituencies and pay less attention to local concerns and ethnic

or interest groups concentrated in particular states. The result would be a more plebiscitary style of presidential elections, with less of the coalition-building across ethnic and regional lines that now characterizes the campaign process. This would prompt an even greater reliance on the media and a corresponding decrease in the importance of state party organizations. Moreover, the logic of direct election seemingly calls for a shift to national presidential primaries as well—a development that would further weaken the political importance both of the states and of state party organizations.

All these arguments in favor of and against abolishing the electoral college were recently debated by a Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Reform of the Presidential Election Process. This group, co-chaired by Jeanne Kirkpatrick of the American Enterprise Institute and Stephen Hess of the Brookings Institution, was composed of a diverse and bipartisan mix of political scientists, journalists, and political strategists (including Reagan advisor John Sears and Carter advisor Patrick Caddell). Throughout most of its deliberations, the Task Force was more or less equally divided between supporters and opponents of the electoral college; but then the group hit upon a new compromise proposal, subsequently dubbed the "national bonus plan," which, remarkably enough, gained almost unanimous support and became the featured recommendation of the Task Force's report.\*

The national bonus plan, in the words of the report, "calls for adding a national pool of electoral votes to the existing state pool of electoral votes. The national pool would consist of two electoral votes for each state (plus the District of Columbia), which would be awarded on a winner-take-all basis to the candidate with the most popu-

\* The report, along with a background paper by William R. Keech, will be published late this spring by Holmes & Meier.

Marc F. Plattner is a Research Associate at the Twentieth Century Fund. He helped to coordinate the activities of the Task Force on Reform of the Presidential Election Process.

lar votes nationwide. The state and national votes would then be added together, and the candidate with the majority of electoral votes would be elected to the presidency."

The national bonus plan effectively meets the main objections put forward by opponents of the existing system. First, it virtually eliminates the possibility of a divergence between the popular-vote and the electoral-vote outcome. Since the popular-vote winner is awarded 102 votes by the national bonus, he need receive only 219 of the 538 state-based electoral votes to gain an electoral-vote majority (i.e., 321 of the new total of 640 electoral votes). If the national bonus plan had been in effect in past elections, the popular-vote winner would in every case have received the most electoral votes as well.

Second, the national bonus plan makes it almost impossible for a regional third-party candidate to produce an electoral college deadlock, as Wallace hoped to do in 1968. In that year Wallace received 46 electoral votes, and if Nixon and Humphrey had split the remaining state votes fairly evenly, no candidate would have won a majority under the existing electoral system. But under the national bonus plan, even if the two leading candidates had split the remaining state-based electoral votes evenly, the popular vote winner would still have gained an electoral-vote majority with the help of the 102-vote national bonus.

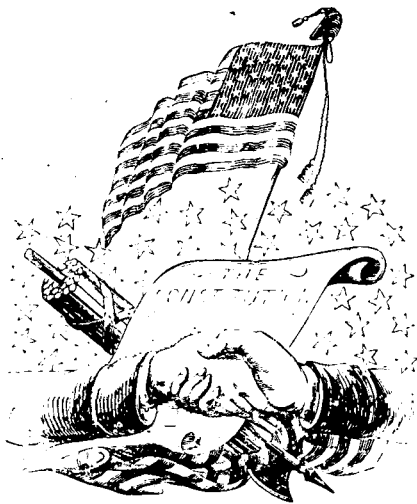
It is also worth noting a third complaint against the electoral college which is remedied by the national bonus plan. Advocates of direct election argue that in states heavily dominated by one political party there is now very little reason for the other party to campaign very vigorously; furthermore, they allege that a citizen in a one-party state who favors the presidential candidate of the weaker party is effectively disenfranchised, since he knows his vote cannot help the candidate of his choice. Under the national bonus plan, however, there would be 102 critical electoral votes contested on a national basis. Candidates would therefore be vitally interested in maximizing their popular-vote total even in states they had no chance of winning, and voters in one-party states would have a much stronger incentive to go to the polls.

Although it promises to achieve the major objectives of supporters of direct election, the national bonus plan does not entail the same risks. It offers no new incentive to minor-party or splinter candidates—if anything, it reduces some of the incentives that now exist. And it maintains the federal character of presidential elections by leaving the states with a decisive constitutional role in the electoral process.

Might there be other potential consequences of the national bonus plan that the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force has overlooked? The late Martin Diamond, in a brilliant pamphlet defending the electoral college,<sup>†</sup> argued that a change to direct

election would not make our presidential election system *more* democratic, but would transform it from a procedure that now is *federally* democratic to one that is *nationally* democratic. Viewed in these terms, the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force's plan adds a distinctly national element (the 102-vote national bonus) to what remains a preponderantly federal method of aggregating the presidential vote. It may be expected, then, that the potential liabilities, as well as the strengths, of the national bonus plan *vis-à-vis* the existing system will flow primarily from its nationalizing aspect. By the same token, these liabilities will generally be less acute versions of problems that beset the *wholly national* method of direct election.

Since the national bonus plan makes it all but certain that the popular-vote leader will win the presidency, it could conceivably encourage campaign strategies that



ignore state boundaries and coalition building across regions and aim simply at amassing a nationwide plurality. In other words, it could lead candidates to act as they would under a system of direct election. Yet the fact that over 80 percent of the electoral votes under the national bonus plan would continue formally to be awarded to the winners of individual states should pose a formidable psychological barrier to this nationalizing tendency. Moreover, if a popular-vote winner's nationwide plurality derives from overwhelming support in a single region and only modest support elsewhere, there still remains the possibility that he could fail to gain an electoral-vote majority.

Another set of potential difficulties with the national bonus plan involves the counting of the national popular vote (which determines the award of the national bonus). Under the current system, the only official tally is the electoral vote count, and

<sup>†</sup> Martin Diamond, *The Electoral College and the American Idea of Democracy*, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., 1977.

each state is free—within certain constitutional limits—to determine in its own fashion such matters as how parties and candidates qualify for a place on the ballot, how ballots are structured, who is qualified to vote, what the hours, places, and methods of voting are, and what procedures are used for vote-tallying and recounts. It would theoretically be possible to allow for continued diversity in these matters under the national bonus plan. But since interstate variations might significantly affect the national popular-vote count, there would probably be considerable pressure for Congress to enact uniform national standards in this area. (Such pressures would obviously be even sharper under a system of direct election.) There is a good case to be made for the desirability of uniform standards of election administration, but the nationalizing of this function could also open the way to serious partisan abuses. This whole question is one that merits further exploration and debate before *any* reform of the electoral college is enacted.

Assuming that problems of election administration would not prove to be a significant liability, is it worth amending the Constitution to substitute the national bonus plan for the electoral college? Authorities from Aristotle to James Madison may readily be cited on the undesirability of changing fundamental political laws for light or transient causes. One Twentieth Century Fund Task Force participant was fond of citing not only Lord Falkland's epigram, "When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change," but also its homelier American equivalent, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." And it must be admitted that, even from the perspective of its detractors, the electoral college has not broken down since 1888, when Benjamin Harrison won the presidency despite running second in the popular vote—a "breakdown" that did not seem to shake the foundations of the Republic.

On the other hand, a much more populist spirit reigns in the United States today than a century ago. Hence it is likely that any future electoral college outcome that reverses the popular-vote count will, whatever its other consequences, spur a headlong rush into instituting direct election. Indeed, direct election might well be adopted without such a stimulus; it may even be approved by the Congress this year (although the odds seem to be against it). And given the risks to our political system inherent in direct election, there are strong grounds for constitutional conservatives to back the national bonus plan as a much safer way of remedying the defects of the electoral college. Any reform always carries with it the potential for unexpected mischief, but the national bonus plan is a conservative reform in the best sense—one designed to preserve insofar as possible the desirable features of the present system. □

THE TALKIES  
by Ben Yagoda



## Rock-and-Roll Grandeur

I'll tell you 'bout the magic  
that will free your soul,  
But it's like trying to tell a stranger  
about rock-and-roll.

So sang the Lovin' Spoonful, back in a time when it seemed that the music really could set America free, until everyone was gyrating to the same beat, not talking about it—because you couldn't tell a stranger about rock-and-roll—but *feeling* it, man, and the world would be made anew.

It didn't work. Rock, which began almost a quarter-century ago as a broad-based, energized reaction to a socially repressed time, and had its moment of hubris in the sixties, is now firmly entrenched in its decadence. To be sure, the American pop song has been irreversibly changed, and good rock is still being made, but the music is no longer anything more than that. The current rock panoply consists of mellow crooners, balding ex-superstars, depersonalized and mindless disco outfits, strung-out heavy metalists, and various other contingents, each appealing to an ever-narrower audience. As for pink-haired punk, or "the New Wave," many see it as a revitalizing force, a return to the energy, simplicity, and anger of rock's roots; others argue, perhaps more persuasively, that Johnny Rotten, Meat Loaf, the Dictators, and company are a glorified death rattle.

As a rule, cultural phenomena begin to be viewed from a historical perspective only when they have lost their currency, and so it is fitting that we are now being treated to a spate of movies about the rock era. (More are on the way—*Grease*, *Hair*, *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, *The Buddy Holly Story*, and, no doubt, others.) To proceed chronologically, *American Hot Wax*, set in 1959, is about Alan Freed, the Ohio-born disc jockey who is credited with coining the term "rock-

and-roll" and with bringing the music to the public's attention, and who was the principal victim of the payola scandals of the early sixties. According to *Hot Wax*, Freed was the innocent victim of an evil coalition from officialdom which combined to stop the first-anniversary rock show at the Brooklyn Paramount (the film's climax), and then sent him out of the music business and to his early death in 1964. Accepting money from record companies was a universal practice among DJs, contend director Floyd Mutrux and screenwriter John Kaye; the establishment was really afraid of the sexual energy released by rock and the prospect of "black kids and white kids boogieing together." The unspoken but strongly implied conclusion is that, *vide* the sixties, we lost the battle but won the war, that Freed died so that rock might live.

*Hot Wax* has been upbraided by some for whitewashing Freed, misrepresenting his foes, and getting the details all wrong. A rock journalist friend of mine, on the other hand, tells me that the film's facts are substantially correct, since Freed's ex-manager was a consultant (although Freed's ex-manager probably isn't the most objective source in the world). But finally, it doesn't matter. Fictions, even if they are based on real events and people, should not be judged on historical accuracy, on how much Brian Keith looks like Teddy Roosevelt, but on their own terms, as works of art.

On that score, *American Hot Wax* fails badly. The story is shapeless. The secondary characters are unreal, especially the pin-striped heavies. The closest Mutrux and Kaye come to interpreting an eminently interpretable decade is showing us pompadours, *Mad* magazines, narrow lapels, big fins, and other fifties' artifacts. The script offers no insight into Freed's devotion to rock or the reasons for his appeal. As for "the music" (as it's repeatedly called), supposedly the source of all the commotion, we are fed the simple-

minded idea that the kids just want to have a good time, the grown-ups want to stop them, but the music's bigger than them all. This credo is expressed in a series of numbing, "significant" lines, ranging from a budding songwriter's "I never had anything till I found the music" to Freed's climactic "You can close the show. You can stop me. But you can never stop rock-and-roll!"

Two things make the film watchable, and occasionally something more than that. The first is Tim McIntire as Freed. McIntire does a hundred things right: the Buddha-like grin when listening to the latest release; the slight Midwestern twang; the straight, almost square mike style (as opposed to the fast-talking hype we expect from AM jocks); the portly imitation of Chuck Berry's duckwalk during the Paramount concert. His performance gives us a glimpse of a far better film that might have been. So do Carl Earl Weaver, Al Chalk, Sam Harkness, and Arnold McCuller as the Chesterfields, a fictional black *a cappella* group "discovered" by Freed. They not only make fine music, but their spirit communicates what distinguished fifties rock: the way anyone, so long as he had three other guys and a bathroom, subway station, or streetcorner, could create it. When Freed, secretly watching the Chesterfields rehearse, murmurs, "That's it, that's it," we may be put off by the portentous way the sentiment is expressed, but we can't help agreeing.

*I Wanna Hold Your Hand*, another New York period piece, is somewhat less ambitious than *American Hot Wax*, and is to that extent more successful. The year is 1964, on the day of the Beatles' initial appearance on the "Ed Sullivan Show." The Fab Four, cleverly, are not shown (not above the waist anyway); the focus is on six suburban teenagers who are determined to catch a glimpse of their heroes, or die trying. Along the way, they manage to carry out every hotel sight-gag in the book:

Ben Yagoda is a free-lance writer living in New York.

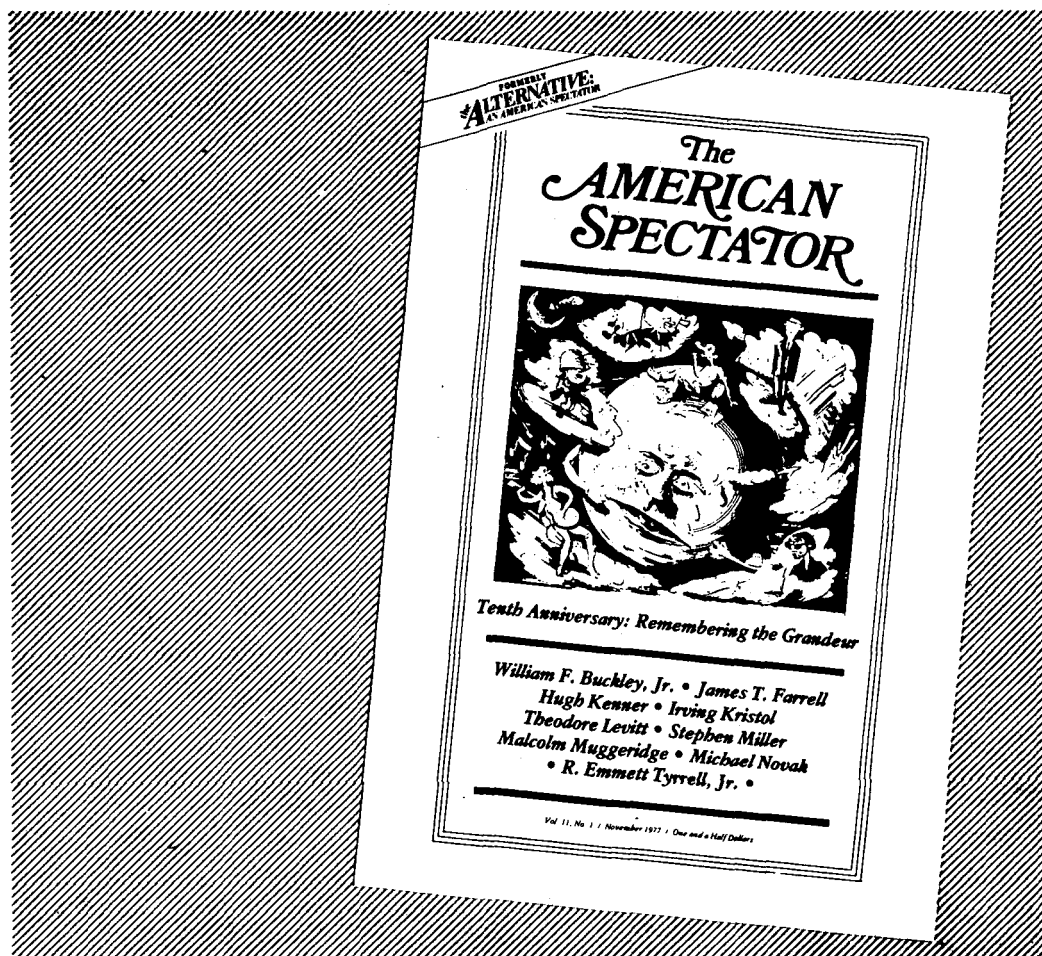
get locked in broom closet, get stuck in elevator, hide in closet of someone else's room, and, sure enough, knock over waiter carrying tray.

In the intelligence department, *I Wanna Hold Your Hand* is somewhere between "Happy Days" and *American Graffiti*. For Robert Zemeckis, who directed, and Bob Gale, with whom he collaborated on the script, Beatlemania is mostly an excuse for making people behave in a remarkably silly fashion. The only character who reflects on it is the obligatory, greased-down Fonz-figure; he says, rather sensibly, "It's like a goddamn disease, for Christ's sake." Zemeckis and Gale, when they're thinking at all, seem to disagree: They show Beatlemania as a benevolent force, something like Prospero, that brings together three pairs of lovers and convinces one girl to dump her stuffy fiancé. Moreover, when the greaser tries to sabotage the Sullivan show's transmitter, lightning destroys his hatchet. So much for cultural analysis.

But if *I Wanna Hold Your Hand* lacks intelligence, it has wit, which in the movies often translates into an eye for the telling detail. Two examples: In the opening scene, we see a worker changing the third letter in the group's name on a marquee from an "e" to an "a"; and the off-camera patter emitting from the Beatles exactly captures their anarchic, schoolboyish good humor. What is more important, and remarkable for a rookie director like Zemeckis, the film is put together masterfully. Almost all the comic bits work; the pacing is exemplary; the look is superb (except for some street scenes that couldn't have been shot anywhere east of Nevada); and the one-track performances (especially Wendie Jo Sperber's, as the most fanatic Beatlephile of all, and Bobby DiCicco's, as guess who) are stylized to just the right degree. My only complaint, aside from the paucity of substance, is that the commercial preceding the Beatles' live TV appearance—during which two of the characters have to get crosstown—takes up three minutes of screen time, which must violate some Aristotelean unity.

*FM*, besides being a rock movie, belongs to a burgeoning genre that one might christen Cinematic Institutional Phenomenology. To make a CIP film, all you need do is take an enterprise—city (*Nashville*), minor-league hockey team (*Slap Shot*), alternative weekly (*Between the Lines*), car wash (*Car Wash*), or now progressive-rock radio station—come up with the flimsiest of plots, provide a ubiquitous score, and set the camera a-rollin'.

To make a *good* CIP film, however, you also need: a firm directorial hand, a theme that somehow unifies the material, and a set of interesting and/or wacky characterizations; and here *FM* strikes out. The only character to hold our attention is Mother (Eileen Brennan), a late-night DJ on QSKY-FM who suspiciously resembles a certain New York City night-owl; she



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simultaneously needs and is repelled by the narcissistic drivel she plays, by "five hours a night, ego-tripping in this toy store." The brilliant Martin Mull, playing an extension of his Barth Gimble on the TV series "America 2Night," is strangely subdued, as if he mistakenly thought Ezra Sacks' script was meaty enough to eliminate the need for comic exaggeration. Station manager Jeff Dugan (Michael Brandon)—Alan Freed's squeaky-clean 1978 counterpart—is on screen longer than anyone else, but you'd never know it.

The real virtue of CIP films is that by stressing the texture of day-to-day life, they can avoid the bugbear of American cinema—melodramatic, contrived plots. Not so *FM*. One strand of the story—QSKY's attempt to steal a Linda Ronstadt concert from its rival—while dull and confusing, is excusable on the grounds that it gives Miss Ronstadt the opportunity to do three numbers on camera. The other part has to do with the pressures put on QSKY by its parent corporation and the station's resistance (a very popular kind of theme among CIP films, which is interesting when you consider the economics of the movie business). Granted, the point of contention—whether Dugan should be forced to play ads for the Army—is a legitimate problem; the main FM station in New

York does so, and the spots are glaringly out of place. But the way the story is told is so full of clichés, bad jokes, and conventions that haven't been new since the thirties that any audience interest is quickly lost. The clincher is the ending, in which the czar of the corporation (the heavies are middle managers, one in pinstripes and the other in plaid-on-plaid) finds out about the dispute, admires QSKY's spunk, and gives it freedom. The idea that the very rich are always fair and sensible is hackneyed and wrong enough to begin with; making it the conclusion of a "now" film is laughable.

*The Last Waltz* is Martin Scorsese's documentary account of the farewell concert given by the rock group The Band in November 1976. If you overlook some weighty remarks about "changes" and "celebration" in the filmed talks with group members, and Scorsese's inept interviewing technique (which consists of either turning immediately to the metaphorical or repeating the answer he has just received as another question), *The Last Waltz* is probably the best rock-concert movie ever. Some credit should go to Scorsese, who pulls no funny stuff during the concert, and who, with the assistance of no fewer than six directors of photography, has provided exquisite light-

ing and solid camerawork. But most should go to The Band and their all-star guests—particularly Joni Mitchell, Van Morrison, and Bob Dylan—for making some fine music.

The Band is a peculiar case. Originally a rhythm-and-blues bar band in the early sixties, they first became known when they backed up Dylan in 1965-1966, and achieved wide recognition with the release of three excellent records in 1968-1970. Their tight music was a unique amalgam of the sounds of America; their lyrics came from deep within the national consciousness (this was all the more remarkable, since four of the five Band members are Canadian).

Since then, however, their output has been so limited that one number, "Up on Cripple Creek," has shown up on five of their albums. And though they release an occasional uninspired album, they don't perform live, and are no longer a musical force of any consequence. I blame this premature demise not on The Band itself, but on the form it chose: Rock-and-rollers, with only a handful of exceptions, have tended to burn out very quickly. Theirs is a music that worships energy and spontaneity, and neither quality is notorious for longevity. The sad fact remains that magic, whether you believe in it or not, can't last forever. □

## CAPITOL IDEAS

by Tom Bethell



## Espionage in Outer Georgetown

Walking across downtown Washington the other day, I soon realized that I was being followed by a dog. Nothing too obvious, like a bloodhound with ears hanging and tongue lolling, but a harmless-looking, shaggy sheepdog frisking along twenty yards in my wake. When I stopped to admire a window display of summer fashions, the dog would stop too and affect interest in a fire hydrant.

This was not a good sign. I know a "tail" when I see one. I turned smartly into Sholls' Colonial Cafeteria on Connecticut

Avenue, a haven for spies, mutterers, and lip-readers—assorted solitary sitters who communicate with ease at a distance. I feel much at home in the place. It is possible to find a quiet corner and stay out of reach of stray electronic bombardment for a few hours at a stretch.

Boris, Peterson, and the Mafia Mother were at their stations. So were one or two well-known Investigative Journalists, who I fear have this covert operation under surveillance and are about to blow a rude whistle. I nodded surreptitiously in Peterson's direction. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed Boris withdrawing behind his "cover"—a copy of the *Wall Street Journal* he has been carrying around for

weeks. I joined in the general muttering for a while and drank several cups of coffee.

Giving Messrs. Stein and Wood the slip, I walked out quickly, adjusting the package under my arm. The dog was still there, unwarily dozing on the sidewalk. I grappled with its collar before it realized I was upon it. The nametag read "Junket," and directed finders to return same to one "Les Aspin" at a Georgetown address. I parted the dog on the head (which I realized was most likely "bugged") so as not to alarm him and thus betray my discovery to the chaps with headphones undoubtedly listening in a few blocks away.

I checked with my sources when I got home and found out that this "Les Aspin"

Tom Bethell is Washington editor of Harper's and contributing editor of the Washington Monthly.

is a one-time Rhodes Scholar, currently a congressman from Wisconsin, who has over the years made a name for himself by criticizing the military. "Now he's after the CIA," my informant confided. "He has been holding hearings on the Hill, with a view to preventing free-lance writers from working for the agency."

As you can imagine, that came as a pretty unpleasant shock. I had known all along that Junket was up to no good. Now I knew why he was following me. I checked with another source, to inquire about the progress of these hearings. Admiral Stansfield Turner, the director of the CIA, had recently testified, and at the conclusion of his testimony he had remarked rather casually that when this legislation was passed, "it would be legal for a free-lancer to work for the KGB, but not the CIA."

The next day I set off with my package—and a new plan. Junket picked me up on schedule at Dupont Circle and trotted along faithfully behind. Into Sholls' once more. Everyone was present and correct. I sat in my usual corner and muttered irritably over my copy of the *New York Times*. Then I looked over and nodded at Boris. I could see out of the corner of my eye that Peterson was startled.

I left. Junket was on my tail in no time. He seemed at first a little disconcerted by the new direction we were taking. I turned left at the light, instead of the customary right. The Soviet Embassy was only about four blocks away. Not too far for Junket to walk. I heaved my package over a wall, and heard it land with a portentous thud. I turned to see if my "tail" was still with me. It was, and it was wagging.

Now, when I set off on my daily travels, Junket is nowhere to be seen. I miss him.

With my newfound interest in foreign affairs, I was prompted the other day to purchase a *Rand-McNally World Atlas*. With that, and a copy of the *World Almanac*, I believe I am as well qualified as most in Washington who pontificate on foreign affairs. Let me observe, then, that in the past year the Soviets have made two serious mistakes, of roughly equal magnitude. One was to get involved as deeply as they have in Africa. I have studied my atlas and consulted my almanac, and I pronounce Africa to be unwinnable.

The other mistake, no less grave, was to strip Maestro Mstislav Rostropovich of his Soviet citizenship. I wonder if the old stone faces of the Comintern realize that this has cost them more goodwill in Washington than almost anything since the Soviet tanks rolled into Prague.

For those still in the dark, Maestro Rostropovich is currently the conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra; apparently, he is also a tremendous cellist. What precisely the Maestro did to annoy the Kremlin must remain a matter for surmise. But their response was egregious indeed. Don't they know that the art-loving, symphony-going, culture-worship-

ping, Kennedy Center-attending Washington mutual admiration society also includes every single practicing Soviet apologist in the business?

These people have now received a terrible jolt and don't know which way to turn. "Ooooooohh, those *naughty* Russians," they are saying to one another. "The Maestro is a perfectly wonderfully cultured gentleman. It was so marvy to chat with him and think to oneself, 'Well, these Soviets are human after all, the Maestro is a jolly old soul *and* a Communist!' But now he's been stripped. Those Soviets, they're nothing but a bunch of...philistines."

It was not a smart move. The Maestro makes the big time socially in Washington. There was a picture of him bussing Katharine Graham of the *Washington Post* the other day, so you know this isn't going to turn out to be good PR for the Russians.

Would I *never* be invited to the Harrimans? I have been waiting for the dinner invitation for two years now. Finally despairing, I signed up for the Georgetown house tour which this year included the Harriman house (the "Riggs-Riley" house on N Street, built 1800-1815) for the first time. (I gather it was also on the tour in 1968, but at the last minute the tour was shut down due to unforeseen rioting.)

I took my place at the end of a huge line of people practically encircling the block; there were about a thousand of us gawkers, I would estimate, a docile flock of suburbanites who waited for an hour in the sun to be admitted briefly to the Grandee of Georgetown's abode. It is a veritable castle.

Harriman, now a gaffer of 86, recently underwent a "security check" since he has been proposed for the position of U.S. Delegate to the UN Special Session on Dis-

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armament. As Art Buchwald has pointed out, Harriman *was* a good friend of Josef Stalin. Harriman's wife Pamela was earlier married to Randolph Churchill and Hollywood producer Leland Hayward (she comes out badly in Brooke Hayward's book, *Haywire*).

Harriman's father owned the Union Pacific Railroad, leaving his son an estimated \$100 million fortune. He has thus been in a position to entertain and yet advocate income redistribution; this has put him on the side of the angels, allowed him to enjoy the best of both worlds, and no doubt alleviated the guilt that must come from inheriting so much money.

There is no evidence, however, that Harriman has suffered personally as a result of any egalitarian schemes he may have supported: One admired the dining room walls covered with Chinese wallpaper made in 1780; the Adams chairs complete with original upholstery; the busts of FDR, Walt Whitman, and Harriman himself, executed by Jo Davidson, a socialist sculptor; the large Van Gogh at one end of the room, the Renoir at the other, the Picasso over the mantle, the Monet, the Pissarro, the portrait of Governor Harriman in the "Petit Salon," the 200-year-old boxwood, the information that there were four turtles in the garden; and in the library the Kennedy-era books, hardcover with fading dust jackets, and the prominently displayed, tooled-leather edition of

*Why Not the Best?*, signed not by the author but by Robert Lipschutz; and yes, high up by the ceiling, a first edition of *The New Class* by Milovan Djilas, the book by the renegade Yugoslavian Communist explaining how the egalitarian philosophy, so noble-sounding in theory, in fact works to create an elite class of equalizers. Averell Harriman, who began life as an industrialist heir-apparent and has ended up as a quintessential member of the new class, learned the lesson well, even if (as I suspect) he never bothered to open the Djilas book but merely sensed which way the wind was blowing—something he has excelled at all his life.

On to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Fritchey's house, further to the west but still in Georgetown. Mrs. Fritchey, formerly Mary Ellis Wisner, was married to a top man in the CIA who committed suicide; she came into a great deal of money. Clayton Fritchey writes a newspaper column which appears in the *Washington Post* most Saturdays; he is perhaps the most strenuously egalitarian of the *Washington Post* op-ed writers. I stood, therefore, in great wonderment before the "inherited treasures, memorabilia and collected antiques," which (in the words of the brochure that came with the price of the ticket) "echo the owners' tastes and experiences"; the 18th-century English wall sconces, the Queen Anne period secretary, the Sheraton chairs, the Chippendale two-tier table, Bessarabian

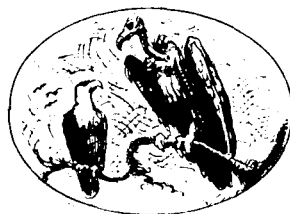
rug, Crown Derby china, Worcester covered urns. I confess I could not find a copy of *The New Class* on the bookshelves, which, the guide pointed out, were decorated prettily with "hand-tooled leather strips"; a set of Ruskin sat demurely behind this ornamentation.

My final stop-off was at the nearby home of Mr. and Mrs. Cord Meyer, Jr. Meyer recently retired as Assistant Deputy Director of Plans for the CIA. His first wife, Mary Pichot, was murdered one sunny morning in 1964, on the towpath bordering Georgetown. A man was brought to trial in the case, but acquitted; Mary Meyer had been a frequent visitor to the White House during Kennedy's presidency.

Bold of Meyer, one feels, to open up his house to the hordes. The new Mrs. Meyer is an arts activist who ran the Gres Gallery on Connecticut Avenue and assisted Nancy Hanks at the National Endowment for the Arts. The house looks, in part, like a modern "museum," with peculiar objects standing around called "sculpture" and strange daubings framed on the walls.

Books. Good to see that our old friend, *The New Class*, is back in place here, plus a copy of *The Penkovskiy Papers* and, not least, *All I Know About Chess* by Cord Meyer himself. What kind of a gambit is it, I wonder, to allow foreign agents to wander through one's own living room? (Anyone could go on the tour—the price was \$7.) A subtle one—that much is certain. □

## THE NATION'S PULSE by Peter J. Rusthoven



### G-Men in the Dock—An Encore

Not too long ago, this column cast a somewhat baleful eye on the decision of Attorney General Griffin Bell and the Justice Department to prosecute former FBI agent John J. Kearney for allegedly illegal surveillance activities directed at members of the Weather Underground. The Weathermen, as most readers will recall, formed a radical-leftist terrorist group which reached its bomb-throwing and occasionally murderous zenith in the late 1960s and early 1970s, riding the wave of vindictive

*Peter J. Rusthoven is an Indianapolis attorney.*

nonsense about this country's participation in the Vietnam war that has since become the conventional wisdom of the media and academe. Since my earlier column, the Carter administration has both changed course on the Kearney matter and found itself engaged in another prosecution, this one for espionage, in which the bulk of the government's evidence was obtained through methods quite similar to those employed by Kearney and his FBI colleagues. Together, the two developments further illustrate the curious and potentially dangerous evolution of that peculiar phenomenon, "post-Watergate morality."

The Justice Department's new strategy in the Kearney case is to let Kearney off the hook, but to substitute as defendants so-called "higher-ups," headed by former FBI Acting Director L. Patrick Gray, who were "really" responsible for the alleged wrongdoing involving the Weathermen. At bottom, the decision reflects a somewhat transparent effort by the Carter administration to placate the myriad of FBI agents who vociferously rallied to Kearney's defense, while at the same time preserving the impression that the "excesses" which supposedly characterized the FBI and CIA during the Nixon years will be exposed and

punished by the new Washington order. In the present atmosphere, it is a clever and thoroughly cynical stroke.

For Kearney, the Attorney General's decision represents a strange half-victory. He is no longer haunted by the specter of a prison term, but he has hardly been vindicated. Indeed, the substantive defenses and justifications for his surveillance of the Weathermen have simply been ignored. No mention is made of the Weathermen's terrorist activities or of their links to Cuba and to the KGB in Moscow; nor is it pointed out that the surveillance activities for which Kearney was indicted were considered legal until a Supreme Court decision rendered *after* Kearney's actions; nor is it emphasized that, even under the language of that decision, Kearney's activities were arguably legal due to the Weathermen's connections with hostile foreign governments. Rather, the impression is left that Kearney (and, by implication, his fellow agents) will be left alone solely because it would be unfair to prosecute field agents who were only "following orders" from more responsible and hence more "guilty" superiors. In other words, the Justice Department has linked Kearney and his fellows with a justly discredited "defense" most associated in the public mind with the moral cowards of Hitler's SS.

Equally cynical is the Attorney General's choice of L. Patrick Gray to head the list of new indictees. In terms of the actual charges formerly levelled at Kearney, Gray is a singularly inappropriate selection. Kearney had in fact retired from the FBI almost a year before Gray became Acting Director. Although the accusations against Kearney and Gray each relate to actions against the Weathermen, the legal theories involved, the timing of the acts, and, by and large, the individuals against whom the acts were directed are different. In the context of post-Watergate morality, however, Gray is a near-perfect choice to head the Justice Department's revised list of evil-doers. His name is already associated with the public's worst impressions of the Nixon era. The substantive reasons for conducting surveillance of the Weathermen, which might have sounded persuasive from the lips of one like Kearney, will be treated by the press as so much self-justification and rationalization when uttered by Gray. In short, the simplistic and inaccurate link between the FBI's anti-terrorist activities and the much-declaimed evils of Watergate will be strengthened, and Carter and company can look forward with some confidence to a conviction which will emphasize their claim to moral superiority over their predecessors.

Ironically, even if the Carter administration plays the post-Watergate game with the FBI prosecutions, the same "new morality" threatens a pending espionage action against a former employee of the United States Information Agency, Ronald Humphrey, and a Vietnamese expatriate,

David Truong. Humphrey is accused of passing classified documents to Truong, who in turn is alleged to have passed the information to the Vietnamese Communists. Not surprisingly, neither Humphrey nor Truong has come in for public censure of the sort formerly reserved for spies. Instead, one sees in such newspapers as the *New York Times* predictable comments, à la the Pentagon Papers case, suggesting that the documents in question were "overclassified" and "not that secret" in the first place.

The prevailing emphasis in reportage of the matter, however, centers on the fact that the evidence against the two defendants was gathered by surreptitious electronic surveillance—measures expressly authorized by Attorney General Bell and President Carter. Serious questions about personal privacy are said to be implicated; far-reaching, new judicial decisions are anticipated. It is even hinted (shudder!) that we are witnessing a return to Nixon-esque misdeeds. As to the espionage aspects of the case, there is not a peep—save for the occasional pious warning that empty phrases about "national security"

should not be used to justify such infringements of personal liberty as were inflicted on Messrs. Humphrey and Truong.

While one may derive a certain petty satisfaction from seeing Mr. Carter fall victim to the same nonsense he has tried to turn to his own advantage in other contexts, genuine concern for the nation's law enforcement and intelligence-gathering activities dictates a serious response to the Humphrey-Truong case. For if the initial focus of the media is a reliable indication, the case against Humphrey and Truong may result in still further erosion of the effectiveness with which the government can respond to threats to our security as a nation. Unlike the allegations about FBI and CIA activities during the Nixon years, the Carter administration's investigation of the espionage case cannot be cast as part of a pervasive atmosphere of alleged wrongdoing and abuse of power. Similarly, no suggestion of personal vendetta, as charged so frequently during the later Nixon years, can plausibly be attached to the surveillance of Humphrey and Truong authorized by Carter and Bell. The absence of such factors, however, appears to have

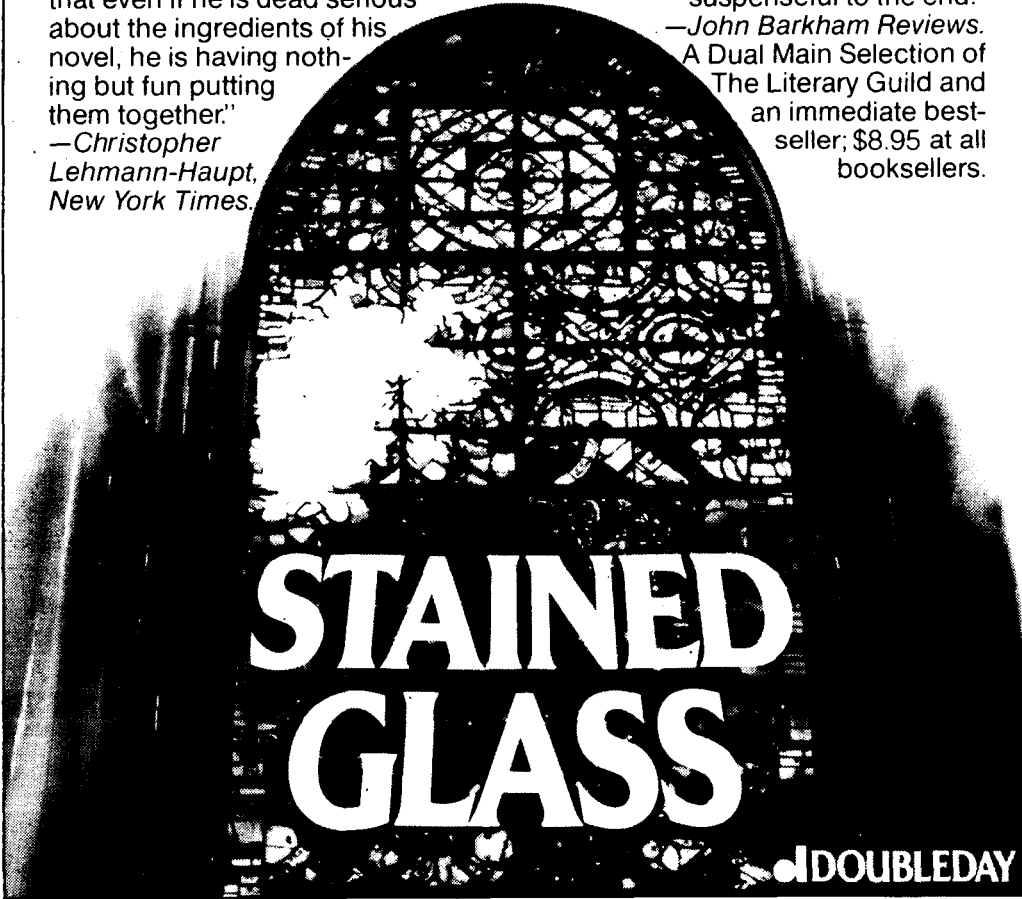
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made relatively little difference in media coverage of the incident.

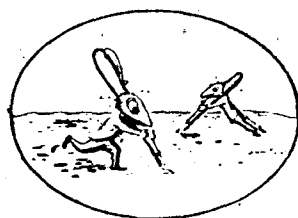
As a consequence, the Humphrey-Truong case may prove a significant new step in the advance of post-Watergate morality. In the FBI prosecutions, considerations of national security have been downplayed as mere excuses for abuse of power by a corrupt administration—an impression heightened by making L. Patrick Gray the primary defendant. In the

Humphrey-Truong matter, however, considerations of national security have been downplayed as simply insufficient to justify surreptitious surveillance. While both positions are short-sighted, the latter has considerably greater potential for weakening our ability to respond both to domestic terrorism and foreign aggression. The current rush to limit the tactics available to our law-enforcement and intelligence-gathering agencies rests on a serious distortion of

recent history, coupled with a well-nigh hysterical overestimation of the dangers involved in permitting the executive branch to conduct warrantless surveillance of spies and saboteurs. One may be sure that, as Congress and the media wax rhetorical about the largely imaginary threat to liberty posed by our own FBI and CIA, neither the terrorists nor the Kremlin will be indulging in any agonizing reappraisals of their methods and tactics. □

## AMONG THE INTELLECTUALOIDS

by A. James McAdams



### Bishops to the Barricades

The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States (PECUSA) is one of America's wealthiest and most powerful denominations; it is also one heavily swayed by the winds of our country's portside *Zeitgeist*. In recent years, leading representatives of PECUSA have embroiled the Church in such extra-sacred activities as the funding of student radicals and black militants. A year and a half ago the Church took one of the most radical theological steps of the century when it voted to admit women to its priesthood and to alter substantially its traditional liturgy. Now PECUSA-watchers are predicting that the Church will use its 1979 National Convention to open the doors of the priesthood to homosexuals and possibly even sanction homosexual marriage.

Spearheading this effort to transform Church practice are the Episcopal publications, the most important of which is the voice of the national Church, *The Episcopalian*. Although claiming to speak equally for all Episcopal interests, *The Episcopalian* has actually been leading a subtle campaign over the years for doctrinal revision and societal change. This effort has been reinforced by countless smaller diocesan and parish publications which lobby for similar concerns through folksy, down-to-earth appeals on the level of the grass roots. More explicitly radical publications also play a role. Of these, the most notable is *The Witness*, a recent issue of

which paints a flattering picture of Castro's Cuba and defends the Puerto Rican terrorists Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin (both members of PECUSA's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs). *The Witness* is backed up by several special-interest publications, the best known of which is *Integrity*, the very vocal and at times astonishingly uninhibited organ of the gay set.

The most revealing of these publications, however, is the recently released *Witness*-sponsored "Study/Action Guide," *Struggling With the System: Probing Alternatives* (available for \$5.75 from *The Witness*, Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002). The political orientation of this collection of articles and commentary, which consistently rivals even Hans Küng in theologic innovation, is unabashedly radical, though this radicalism is ill-served by the fact that the "Guide's" content often reflects the political acumen of a college sophomore taking his first course in Marxism. Nevertheless, the mere fact that the collection was edited by an Episcopal bishop (Robert L. DeWitt), and published by an outfit whose board of directors includes five other bishops (Morris Arnold, Lloyd Gressle, John Hines, John Krumm, and Brooke Mosley), should alert us that theology has taken an interesting turn in the upper reaches of the Episcopal hierarchy.

In fact, *Struggling With the System* was never intended to be merely an intellectual exercise. According to its editors, the "Study/Action Guide" was prepared to assist "local groups"—specifically, cells of 10-12 Christian activists assembling for

discussion at regular intervals in each other's homes—"in their struggle to understand the nature of American oppression and to explore ways out of it." In these pages we learn that oppression and its attendant evils (poverty, inflation, unemployment, sexism) have too often been blamed on the failings of individuals, when the root cause of such injustice is really the systemic malfunction of American institutions. These institutions, we are told, must be understood, corrected, abolished if necessary, and it is precisely the function of the "Guide" to show how this can be accomplished.

The first question the editors ask is an easy one: "What's Wrong With Life in the United States?" The answer: Monopoly Capitalism. "God's law says that the wealth of the world should be shared by all, and should never form oppressive monopolies." But American monopolies and kindred demon spirits are hard at work contravening God's will. To prove the point, the editors provide an article on the "alienating" and "profit-hungry" New York Telephone Company and a piece by the infamous Harvard theologian, Harvey Cox, on "Barbie Doll and the Spectre of Cultural Imperialism." Still another article purports to explain the origins of the capitalist world "empire," appealing to such expansive generalizations as "The underdevelopment of the 'Third World' is the direct result of its being incorporated, for the last 400 years, into the global capitalist system."

Still, "What Right Does the Church Have to Speak About These Things?"

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According to our editors, every right in the world. The problem is that the Church has for too long been directed by merely "liberal" Christians, who have failed "to define the real sources of sin in our time [and] to provide a compelling moral mandate for radical change and real hope for the future." The liberal, it seems, looks for reform and reconciliation within the system, but "the truth of the matter is that one cannot expect to improve a system that is inherently irrational and unjust." The enlightened Christian knows that he must be "uncompromisingly active" in his struggle to shape the world, and he can be assured that the moral precedents for his own radicalism have already been set by the likes of Jesus Christ, the Church League for Industrial Democracy, the Philadelphia Task Force for Women and Religion, and Gustavo Gutierrez. It is written: "Political action is *not* secular and suspect; it is the body of the faithful engaged in the mission of Christ." It is good to liberate man spiritually, but even better to liberate him socially, economically, and politically, too.

But "What is the 'Capitalist System'?" Our editors seem satisfied with a straightforward, 19th-century Marxian critique. "Capitalism can be characterized as a particular mode of production in which labor becomes a commodity like any other object of exchange." Further, "in the last 500 years the central tendency of history has been the growing separation of producers from the means of production and their transformation into proletarians." Capitalism is inefficient and wasteful; it is irrational; it is unjust. It is a notorious breeder of sexism, and it fosters racism which "is useful to capitalism because it obfuscates class interests and provides a convenient psychological outlet for worker frustration, thereby reinforcing the existing class structure."

We all want to know, "Is There an Alternative?" Happily, our editors think there is. "Socialism will remedy the major evils of capitalism, abolish exploitation, poverty, insecurity, and war, and make for greater welfare and happiness of man." But a necessary dose of realism must accompany this optimistic countenance, for the socialist road is a hard one: "Socialism does not mean piecemeal patchwork reform of capitalism. It means revolutionary change—the reconstruction of society along entirely different lines." Evidently, our editors see themselves as acutely aware of this fact, and they invoke worthy examples of revolutionary socialism which may be useful in the radical reconstruction of our own society. In particular, the Chinese experiment intrigues them. "It is clear," one Episcopal priest argues, "that the Chinese success in transforming their economy and way of life is due to more than a central authority. True, politics is pervasive, but it [seems] to be a participatory politics—far more so than ours." In another article, this writer notes that

"God's creation is still unfolding; His promises are being fulfilled in China and in today's world." What one still wants to know is, which promises?

What is one to make of this "Study/Action Guide"? On impulse, we might want to conclude that Marxists have taken over the Episocal Church and that a serious revolutionary threat looms imminent. But I doubt that true Marxists (if there still be such creatures) would really want to associate themselves with publications like *Struggling With the System*. If this is Marxism, it is do-gooding Marxism of the pulpit, the armchair, and the pool-side; it is Sunday-afternoon-following-Mass-on-the-yacht-with-cocktail-and-guilty-conscience-in-hand Marxism; and in so many respects, it is just plain nonsense.

What makes the publication of such foolishness so remarkable—and annoying—is

that it comes to us under the auspices of men who should know better and who can rightly be expected to manifest behavior befitting their high stations. These are men to whom thousands of Americans look for daily guidance in matters of faith and morals. In representing a church, they are entrusted with the preservation of something which is precious to the lives of many. When they act in an irresponsible and unthinking manner—as they have in permitting the publication of this tract—they betray that trust and threaten to violate something—a tradition and a faith—which is considerably more important than their own utopian fantasies.

Undoubtedly, there are Episcopalians who will take *Struggling With the System* and related publications quite seriously. Some may be fooled, taking what they read to be the gospel truth about American society and about the nature of Christian



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activity within that society. Others, not so fooled, may pack up their bags in disgust and leave the Church. Either way, something is clearly amiss, for which the Church's highest authorities, its bishops, are at least partly responsible.

The point is that there really is no place for publications of this sort within the Church, or at least by Church authorities. If bishops or priests have private dreams of being "little Lenins," they would do well

to keep their dialectical confessions to the psychiatrist's couch. *Struggling With the System, The Witness, Integrity*, and their counterparts in other churches—pick your own house of worship—only make a mockery of religious activity.

Naturally, there is a place for the religiously-motivated criticism of modern society. Religion, after all, does have something to do with human involvement in the world, and American life—its

politics, its economy, its culture—is hardly above criticism. Yet when publications like these choose to court muddled thinking and puerile crusading, as has become their wont, religious activity becomes distorted; social criticism, irresponsible and perverse. However amusing we may find these publications at times, they nevertheless tend to wreak havoc upon the traditions, religious and otherwise, which have shaped our world. □

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John Nollson

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## Author's Reply

While I know it is bad form to respond to a review of one's work, Thatcher Grubell, in his review of my new collection of short pieces (*The Cultural Milieux in the Space-Time Continuum: Essays on the Emerging Aesthetic of the Nth Dimension*, Oral Roberts University Press, xvii + 679 pp., \$18.98), makes so many errors of fact that I have to wonder whether he bothered to read the book.

Indeed, so numerous are his blunders, his misinterpretations, his misconstruals, his misconstructions that a complete listing of them would take me more time than I have available.

Just consider his bigoted blast at the genre. Grubell writes: "Nollson's work is proof-positive: short pieces got no reason to live." Is this not the tip-off that the book will get no fair hearing from such a low-grade wisecracker? And why does he claim that my essay "Who Buys Those Little Pewter Statues From the Franklin Mint Anyway?" skirts the real issue? If he had read the footnotes, he would have seen my reference to the presence of the Franklin Mint in *Philadelphia*. Not *Topeka*, as he claims.

But these are petty details. I maintain throughout that the aesthetic of the Nth Dimension will almost certainly be characterized by what I choose to call *truberance*. This is a wholly new and original concept, not just a seventh kind of irony. Grubell should know better. If I believed that the aesthetic of the various dimensions, beginning with the first and running right on through infinity to the Nth, could be comprehended by kinds of irony—or at least dissonance—I would have so numbered the ironies, so that in the Nth Dimension, there would be N kinds of irony. Surely not seven. And that is precisely why I had to invent the notion of *truberance*, the means whereby the plastic arts, the literary arts,

the cinematic arts, and the purely technological arts like laser-light shows will surely become mirror images of themselves when seen from the *other side* of a black hole.

Anti-sculpture will not appear, accordingly, until it can be fabricated from antimatter, not pewter. Hence the essay on the output of the Franklin Mint. But Grubell is so dense that he cannot make the simplest distinction between an argument and its own refutation.

I argue, further, that one of the central benefits of *truberance*, both as a real fact and as an analytic convention, is its prediction that the aesthetic world of the Nth Dimension will be characterized not merely by a unity of the arts, but by a new companionability among artists themselves. Fistfights, backbiting, lovers' quarrels, and the like will disappear. The basic antagonism will vanish. Why?

As I write on p. 419: "Our life in the world of three dimensions allows us to imagine the existence of, at the most, three sexes: homosexuality, bisexuality, and unisexuality. Trisexuality is a logical possibility. In the fourth dimension, tetrasexuality appears, followed by penta-, hexa-, septa-, octo-, nona-, and decasexuality as we move on out the old space warp. It is therefore inevitable that the Nth Dimension will be characterized by Nsexuality, or anti-sexuality, precisely the opposite of the way things are now. True, advanced computers will be required to keep track of the N sexes, their permutations, combinations, and possibilities, but we are well enough prepared for that. In fact, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology already has an artificial intelligence laboratory."

It is a reflection on Grubell's lack of intellectual potency that he can, by his own admission, comprehend the existence of no more than five sexes. Beyond that, he

starts to have trouble with his roommates. But I do not see why he cannot cope with this problem without venting his spleen on decent and diligent scholars who are just trying to earn an honest living.

But let us suppose, just for a moment, that I am wrong and that Grubell is right. Even this charitable assumption cannot explain his perverse insistence that my work ought to be grouped with an earlier school of rhetoricians whose theories took hold in suburban Milwaukee in the late 1930s.

The Milwaukee Modalists, as they have come to be called, were nothing but a splinter group, intellectually irrelevant and analytically trivial. If it were otherwise, they would have moved to New York, or at least Chicago, where they would have become a school and not a forgotten sect. It is the worst form of libel to link me with a group of dull Protestants who have failed to produce a single literary autobiography of any merit. In fact, I have a letter from the titular head of the Modalists—his thoroughly conventional name escapes me—wherein he asserts that I have nothing to do with them, nor they with me. How much longer will it take before intellectual life in this country is finally rid of the McCarthyist tactic of guilt by association?

Perhaps we are on to something. Grubell's review of my book is laced with spite, envy, jealousy, resentment, bile, venom, gall, phlegm, vulgarity, gelatin, rancor, obduracy, stinginess, and escarole. He is neither sure-witted nor sure-handed nor sure-footed but, like a lumbering podiatrist, he tramples on every canon of intellectual decency. He slaps his tail against the tide of learning, like a baleen whale protesting the inevitability of his own extinction. He is, in sum, a typically unrepentant Dreyfusard—or so he would have us think.

What else does he have to hide? □

## BOOK REVIEW

*Winston S. Churchill, Volume V, 1922-1939*  
Martin Gilbert / Houghton-Mifflin / \$30.00

Steven Maaranen

In recent years Sir Winston Churchill has suffered that debunking criticism almost universally accorded great men by what Churchill himself called "a peculiar type of brainy people." Most such criticism stems from the numerous political controversies which marked Churchill's long career, especially in the years 1922-1939. In Volume V of the official biography, Martin Gilbert continues the task of his earlier volumes—confronting the accumulated criticisms of Churchill's deeds and policies. Gilbert decisively corrects the distortions and false accusations levelled by Churchill's contemporaries, and allows us to assess Churchill anew as a statesman.

In 1924 Churchill returned to public office as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Stanley Baldwin's second government. The following year he rejoined the Conservative Party. By crossing the floor twice, and achieving high office in both cases, Churchill provoked charges of opportunism and unsteadiness. In 1925 he played a major role in breaking the General Strike, further convincing the British left of his rashness and bellicosity. Later in his term as Chancellor, Churchill superintended Britain's return to the gold standard, and extracted heavy cuts in defense spending in order to stimulate the economy. When the economy collapsed under

the pressure of the world depression, Churchill's economic judgment was assailed; when he later attacked the government for inadequate defense preparations in the face of German rearmament, both his consistency and motives were widely questioned. From 1929 through 1935 Churchill led the "diehard" opposition to the government's bill to move India towards Dominion status. The supporters of the India Bill from all parties supposed that he was attempting to return to public office by advocating an irresponsible and demagogic cause. For six years Churchill relentlessly opposed every step of the bill's passage, despite such aspersions on his motives and a visible weakening of his political power—the result of his obdurate support of a lost cause.

Churchill fared little better in other policy battles in the thirties. He was branded an enemy of European conciliation when he questioned the wisdom of the World Disarmament Conference in 1932. In 1933 he commenced a prolonged campaign to increase British defense spending. When his alarm at the rise of Hitler proved justified, he only earned the enmity of many who had ignored his warnings. In 1936 his support of Edward VIII and Mrs. Simpson was widely viewed as an attempt to form a "King's Party" to supplant Baldwin's government. As late as the winter of 1938, while Neville Chamberlain was appeasing Hitler, Churchill's political fortunes were so low that a serious attempt was mounted to unseat him from his own constituency.

Churchill was often called opportunistic or quixotic, yet he himself had warned about the misunderstanding of consistency in public affairs. "A distinction should be made," he argued, "between two kinds of political consistency." The motives of a leader who jumps from one policy to a contrary one in accordance with the tides of public opinion "must be examined more studiously than if he swims against it." But a "statesman in contact with the moving current of events and anxious to keep the ship on an even keel and steer a steady course may lean all his weight now on one side and now on the other. His arguments in each case when contrasted can be shown to be not only very different in character, but contrary in spirit and opposite in direction: yet his object will throughout have remained the same." In short, "the only way a man can remain consistent amid changing circumstances is to change with them while preserving the same dominating purpose."

Did Churchill's career, despite the seeming contradictions, display such a guiding purpose? The evidence of Volume V suggests that it did. As shown by Gilbert, Churchill's strategic view had two prime components. The first was geopolitical, and was fully elaborated in his *Marlborough* and later in his *History of the English Speaking Peoples*. Both of these works noted a remarkable continuity in British foreign policy which Churchill described in March 1936: "For four

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hundred years the foreign policy of England has been to oppose the strongest, most dominating Power on the Continent, and particularly to prevent the Low Countries falling into the hands of such a Power." To meet each great challenge Britain had always avoided the road of least resistance—an alliance with the pre-dominating European power—and had instead forged alliances of small states to forestall the overweening ambitions of the great power, be it Spain, France, or Germany. The mastery of the continent by any single power, even a friendly one, would have left the island a junior partner, essentially at the disposition of the senior. Such was the geopolitical lesson learned by Britain.

Equally important in determining right policy was the character of regimes, particularly the character of the British nation itself which, while protecting its own interests, served a higher cause as well. To Churchill, Britain's heritage was no less than civilization itself. As he explained in 1938, civilization "means a society based upon the opinion of civil-ians." In civilized states, the rule of war-lords and the life of the armed camp "gives place to parliaments, where laws are made, and independent courts of justice in which over long periods those laws are maintained." The heart of civilization is the subordination of the governors to "the settled customs of the people and their will as expressed through the Constitution." It was these principles, Churchill pointed out, that had "shaped the free, ordered, tolerant Civilization of the British Isles and British Empire," and for which Britain had become the principal custodian. In effect, Britain's role on the world scene was an extension of her civilization.

It was just as essential, in formulating foreign policy, to take account of the ideas and principles which directed the conduct of other nations. On the narrow criterion of military strength, France ought to have been Britain's potential enemy on the continent in the early thirties. French armed forces dwarfed those of Britain or Germany, yet Churchill never tired of repeating "Thank God for the French Army." Because of the character and situation of France, he had no apprehension of French aggression: "I am sure that France,...which is the most pacific nation in Europe at the present time, as she is, fortunately, the most efficiently armed, would never attempt any violation of the Locarno Treaty, and, least of all, in opposition to the country with which she is in such amicable relations—Great Britain." Far from considering it a threat, Churchill saw French military strength as the surest guarantee for European peace. It was not merely French pacifism, and satisfaction with the status quo in Europe, that underlay his confidence. France was also, as he argued in April 1933, the "sole great surviving democracy in Europe."

The existence of France's parliamentary institutions promised moderation in her policies; the extinction of those institutions in Germany was a sinister portent: "one of the things which we were told after the Great War would be a security for us was that Germany would be a democracy with Parliamentary institutions. All that has been swept away."

Yet Churchill knew that the very thing that made the democracies good-natured also made them vulnerable. Churchill's rearmament campaign flew in the teeth of the powerful democratic tendency towards pacifism. He faced, as had Lincoln, the question of whether a democratic government must, of necessity, either be "too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence."

Churchill's refusal to make concessions to Nazi Germany, and his advocacy of British rearmament, was, on the surface, a marked departure from the line he had followed during the twenties. But in the twenties Germany was a defeated nation and, though smarting under a treaty it considered unjust, was nonetheless capable under the auspices of the Weimar constitution of maturing into a moderate democratic regime. During the twenties Churchill urged tolerance of German perversity, and a policy of easing her just grievances at a pace that would not arouse the apprehensions of France. He believed that Britain's evenhanded foreign policy (exemplified by Locarno), combined with the quiet atrophy of British military spending (down to a level appropriate to a non-threatening Europe), was the proper way to compensate Germany for her enforced poverty of military power. None of these objectives was inconsistent with Churchill's desire to evolve a pacified Europe, or with his overall strategic view. Nor do they seem improvident in light of the facts and opportunities of the time. Danger would come only if these views continued to dominate thinking once the conditions that gave rise to them had passed.

Signs of political instability and nascent rearmament in Germany troubled Churchill in the first years of the thirties. The Nazi triumph in 1933 led him to reverse his policy towards Germany and British armaments. In contrast to the slow and muddled response characteristic of most public men in Britain, Churchill's reaction was swift. Not viewing the world through the filters of ideology, he did not see Hitler as the personification of the last stages of capitalism, or as the unpalatable but perhaps necessary instrument of upper-class reaction against Communist-inspired, working-class agitation. Churchill instead viewed the rise of dictatorship as the latest manifestation of the enduring political question: freedom or servitude, justice or barbarism. His policy was to resist oppression whatever its ideological guise.

Churchill's resistance to the fascist

dictators was but another application of principles which had made him Britain's earliest and most implacable foe of Soviet Communism. He had been appalled by the Bolshevik revolution. "The British nation is the foe of tyranny in every form. That is why we fought Kaiserism and that is why we would fight it again. That is why we are opposing Bolshevism," he said in 1919. "Of all tyrannies in history the Bolshevik tyranny is the worst, the most destructive, and the most degrading." Churchill saw the issue between the West and Bolshevism as one between "such order as we have been able to build up since the dawn of history" and "an animal form of barbarism....Between them...there can, as Lenin rightly proclaims, be neither truce nor pact."

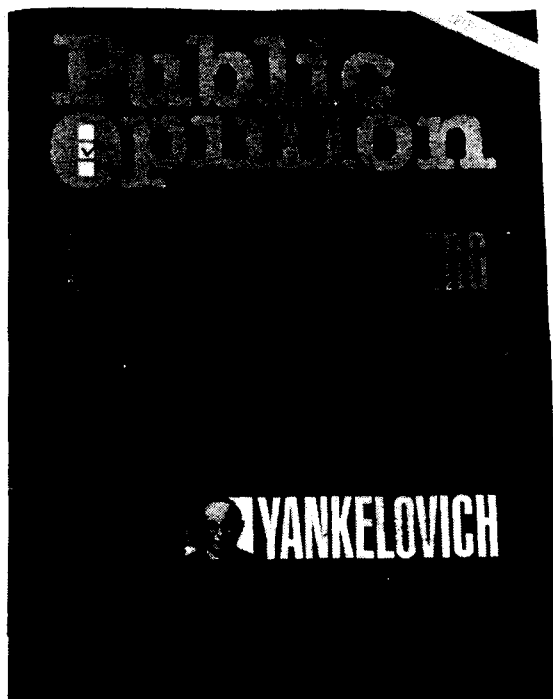
The apparent inconsistency of this bold declaration with his support for a British-French-Russian alliance in 1936, and his conclusion of the alliance with Stalin in 1941, can certainly be criticized. It was galling to Churchill himself. On first advocating a united cause with Stalin on 22 June 1941, Churchill publicly reflected on his twenty-five year opposition to Communism: "I will unsay no word that I have spoken about it." Yet "any man or state who fights on against Nazidom will have our aid." Or as he put the matter more colorfully to his private secretary, "If Hitler invaded Hell, I would at least make a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons."

The British alliance with the Soviet Union was but one of many distasteful expedients which Churchill not only accepted but actively sought during his public career. He knew that circumstances often forced statesmen to actions which, while necessary to attain good ends, were by no means choiceworthy in themselves; that at the extremities of political life, for example during war, there is no absolute or infallible rule that tells a statesman what can and cannot be done. The most abhorrent tactics might be required to preserve the good cause.

To Churchill, only the enduring justice of the allies' cause could make acceptable their descent to such methods as the bombing of open towns. A just people might reluctantly use these tactics under the force of circumstance, but they could never accept them as everyday methods and must always bear the weight of their use upon their conscience. Churchill's position is far different from that of a regime which views such methods as commonplace or legitimate instruments of rule. Such regimes, Nazi and Bolshevik, incorporated atrocities into the theory and practice of governing, and Churchill labeled them barbarian. Here, on the basis of their motive principles and not from transitory necessities, Churchill drew the line between good and evil regimes. He could not take the advice of "degenerate people" that such clashes as that between the Bolsheviks and the

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White Russians were "six of one and half-a-dozen of the other....We are still forced to distinguish between right and wrong, loyalty and treachery, health and disease, progress and anarchy."

Churchill saw "a universally valid hier-

archy of ends, but...no universally valid rules of action." Until the true character and intention of a man or regime became clear, the momentary use of extreme tactics did not instantly place him beyond the pale. Under dire circumstances actions

might have to be taken which may yet be justified by necessity—perhaps survival itself. To those modern scholars who view statesmanship as the unvarying application of universal rules of action, Churchill remains an enigma. □

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Economic War Against the Jews*

Walter Henry Nelson and Terence Prittie / Random House / \$10.00

Patrick Cosgrave

The most important thing to say, and to say immediately, about Prittie and Nelson's book is that its title is at once challenging and true; and yet that it is not true enough. Most Europeans and Americans who are politically aware know that the Arab nations refuse to trade with Israel and refuse to trade with companies who trade with Israel. They are not, I think, aware of the fact that the near-thirty-year-old boycott was designed for use against, has been used against, and is being used against Jews, whether they are of American, British, or any other nationality. They are even less aware that the boycott machinery has been employed against individuals who are not Jewish but who admit—as I do myself—to the description "Zionist," meaning someone who supports the right of the state of Israel to exist. In this sense, Prittie and Nelson's title is at once more comprehensive than one might expect, and less comprehensive than the truth. The Arab boycott is, indeed, an instrument of war against the freedom of citizens of all countries to express and act upon their opinions and beliefs. And if any part of that assertion be doubted, one need only look at the terms of a form which the government of Saudi Arabia insists must be completed by any company trading within its borders. The Saudis require a "solemn" declaration "that this company is not a Jewish company, nor controlled by Jews or Zionists."

The boycott is, thus, a planned cancer, working its way through western commercial society. If we have anything to be grateful for, it is simply that collectively the Arabs have never managed to implement the boycott with real efficiency; and that individual Arab countries have always ignored its provisions when these do not suit their national interests. But the danger remains; and with the accretion of their oil wealth the Arabs have certainly been making the boycott more effective in recent years. To understand its insidious nature one must grasp the way it works, and the extensiveness of its ambition.

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The boycott had its origin in events which took place long before the state of Israel was founded. It arose from attempts by Arab nationalists to boycott the activities—commercial and otherwise—of the Jewish community in Palestine. It has since been formalized in a coordinating committee with headquarters in Damascus and representatives on most Arab-oriented Chambers of Commerce throughout the world.

The boycott has three interlocking dimensions. First (the primary boycott), Arab countries refuse to trade with Israel. One can hardly complain about that, since they consider themselves to be in a state of war with her. Second (the secondary boycott), they refuse to trade with companies who trade with Israel. That is a questionable matter, but could still be considered within their rights. Third (the tertiary boycott), they refuse to trade with those in third countries who trade with those who trade with Israel; and it is at this point that their desire to disrupt and distort the *internal* commercial affairs of third countries—and the rights and activities of third-country companies—becomes most apparent. Thus, for example, a company in Britain who trades in engineering goods might find itself blacklisted because it buys its stationery from a company which sells stationery in Israel. Or—more obviously sinister—the same company might be blacklisted because it trades with another company which has a Jew on its board. The scope for distortion of, and damage to, the interests of individuals and especially small companies (vulnerable because they have fewer resources than the giants) is obvious and considerable.

The immense value of Prittie and Nelson's book lies in its worldwide coverage—relentless, detailed, and cumulative—of the operations and ramifications of the secondary and tertiary boycotts. Quantities of information about the activities of third-country companies are often demanded by the boycott authorities; and often given. Stipulations about the company's trading and employment practices are laid down. Their right to trade with other companies in their own city is questioned. Their right

to make appointments and promotions according to their own commercial judgment is challenged. And, even if all the humiliating and sometimes disabling conditions are met, there is no guarantee of advantage gained.

Let me give an example. British Leyland, my own country's largest, domestically-owned automobile manufacturer, gave up its assembly plant in Israel, and joined the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce. It was promised a Land Rover manufacturing plant in Egypt, but never got it. Ford Motor Company, on the other hand, simply ignored communications from the Boycott Office, and retained its Israeli plant. Now it is erecting a \$150 million plant in Egypt as well. Ford is not the first case of a company—and most of the brave and successful ones are American—defying the boycott without suffering its penalties. It is relevant to add that, despite the foot-dragging of successive administrations, Congress has been consistently prepared to defend the freedom of American companies (most recently in the Export Administration Amendments Act of 1977) to work in spite of foreign pressure. The extravagant and fanatic lengths to which the Arabs are sometimes prepared to go, however, are indicated by the refusal of Saudi Arabia to grant port space to an American ship, *National Peace*, because it had once, under a previous name, *Memory*, carried on trade with Israel. As one commentator said, "the engine room still has a Jewish heart."

The great and fundamental fact, however, is the extent to which the Arab world desperately needs western goods and western technology. As long as the Arabs are unable to divide western companies from one another, or play one off against the other, they invariably back down on their threats. And, of course, the only power that can ensure equal treatment for all its own companies is the third-country government. That is why, admirable though much of what Congress has done is, it is still to be regretted that the White House and the Treasury have invariably been slow to implement the legislative rules that would oblige all companies

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observing the boycott to register their observance; would prevent them from full observance; and would lay them open to civil-rights suits in a number of cases.

Note again, though, the use of the word "Jewish" in the quotation above. The complexities of modern industry and commerce are great. Few outside the ranks of the idealists would expect to find the majority of companies in an economy to be insensitive to informal pressure; or to even the wilder wishes of a good customer. In surveying the story of the Arab boycott it does not require a cynic to emphasize the fact that it is the mighty companies—Ford; or Hilton, which declined to accept the Boycott Office's prohibition on the construction of the Tel Aviv Hilton, and saw the Arab summit of 1974 nonetheless take place in the Hilton in Rabat—who most readily resist the importunings of Damas-

cus. But on the way to these successes small companies, and cowardly companies, have suffered; and individual citizens of third countries have suffered in unknown numbers. Lord Mancraft, a prominent British Jew, was driven from the board of the Norwich Union insurance company; and General Pierre Koenig, a French war hero, from the board of a major French company. If men of that eminence could be punished for their ethnic character or their sympathy, how many humbler citizens have been done down? And how many small companies, uncertain of government protection, have silently acquiesced under threat?

As things stand, the most powerful, and the most resistant, companies are American, just as the United States has been the foremost country in its refusal to comply with the injuries offered its citizens by the

Arabs. It is time—especially following the 1977 meetings of American and European parliamentary delegations—for the American government to give lead and sustenance to the less secure, less certain, European governments as well. With her enormous commercial power, the United States could enforce the sanction stated in international insurance conventions, to the effect that those observing trade boycotts automatically lose all insurance entitlement. Likewise, the U.S., which has engaged in a great deal of negotiation about the ethics of international trade with the EEC countries, could ensure their support for the anti-boycott provisions of various UN resolutions and of the OECD. It is a poor sham of a country that cannot protect its own economy and citizens; and the United States has been the first in any degree to act on that apprehension. □

## BOOK REVIEW

*The Abuse of Power: The Permanent Government and the Fall of New York*

Jack Newfield and Paul DuBrul / Viking Press / \$12.50

Steven D. Lagerfeld

The notion of a "permanent government," a ruling elite drawn from sources as diverse as banking and party politics, is an enduring feature of populist reform ideology. This "elite" has always served as a convenient culprit for real and imagined ills, a role rendered superficially plausible by the ease with which the group can be identified and uncommon powers attributed to it. Jack Newfield, who over the years has exhaustively catalogued New York City's dirty political laundry in the pages of the *Village Voice*, and Paul DuBrul would have us believe that a ruling elite of no more than 2,000 men seeking personal gain was responsible for New York City's fiscal collapse. Such a misunderstanding of government powers does more than obscure the true nature of the crisis. It reveals the chronic self-deception of reform: the illusion that there exists an elite with enough power to create and perpetuate urban ills, and that reformers endowed with the same powers could therefore easily cure them after acceding to political office.

This was clearly the assumption in the first mayoral campaign of John Lindsay, who on his first day in office delivered an attack on the "power brokers" who had allegedly run the city. He quickly set out to humble the municipal labor unions, to tame the bureaucracy, and to pass ambitious legislation in the state capital, and he suffered quick defeats. The most notable

was the crippling 12-day strike by transit workers, which began within months of Lindsay's inauguration. A similar disaster occurred when Lindsay moved precipitously to decentralize the school system and succeeded, unnecessarily, in alienating the teaching professionals and the middle class whose cooperation could have minimized the dislocation.

Lindsay's eight-year tenure brought a series of defeats at the hands of the forces he sought to subdue, which added to the city's fiscal burdens and impaired the administration's ability to address chronic urban problems. As a result of concessions made by Lindsay to prevent another strike and "buy" union support, or at least neutrality, wages in the transit system (to cite one small example) rose 117 percent in the decade before the recent agreement, and now make up over 82 percent of the mass-transit budget at a time when the system's physical plant is in desperate need of revitalization.

Lindsay's mistakes were not merely tactical errors—they reflected a profound flaw in reform ideology. In their rush to supplant the "permanent government," the reformers failed to recognize that it was one thing to win elections and quite another to govern. Lindsay adeptly put together an electoral coalition of upper-middle-class reformers and minority groups, but at the expense of support from the city's major political institutions and much of the middle class. These institutions, released from the constraints and benefits of participating in the governing

coalition, suddenly became outsiders, freed of the obligation to compromise and encouraged to pursue their goals more aggressively. The reform constituency, a loose and formless aggregation, did not provide the kind of organized support necessary to withstand these pressures. It raised instead its own chorus of inchoate and unrestrained demands for reforms and services.

Without the means to resist the demands of groups which were themselves without any incentives to exercise self-restraint, Lindsay caved in. The cost of social services, perhaps the leading example, more than tripled during the Lindsay years and was also the only major category to expand its share of the budget, growing from 14 percent of the first Lindsay budget to 22 percent of the last. And much of the increase went to the welfare bureaucracy, which consumes one of every three New York social-service dollars.

What followed had been foreshadowed during the administration of Lindsay's predecessor, Robert Wagner, who, after two terms in office as a Tammany Hall Democrat, unfurled his colors and ran as a reform Democrat in 1961. Wagner managed to retain much of his original support, particularly among the municipal labor unions, on the strength of past allegiances and his administration's equanimity. Yet his switch to reform politics marked the beginning of the fragmentation of the city's politics. In the final year of Wagner's tenure, the first in a long series

Steven D. Lagerfeld is assistant editor of *The Public Interest*.

of deficits appeared in the city's budget. During the Lindsay administration, deficits grew steadily and were passed from year to year, resulting in an accumulated deficit of \$2.3 billion for the final Lindsay budget. When the crisis came in 1975 during the Beame administration, the accumulated deficit had reached \$3.3 billion, which had to be financed in a national short-term municipal securities market of only \$11 billion.

Newfield and DuBrul focus their criticism on the activities of the "permanent government" during the Beame years, ignoring the fact that most of the deficit was amassed prior to his administration. They are good reporters—the corruption they document is certainly real—but poor theorists. Their facts do not add up. Beame did indeed attempt to rebuild the Democratic Party organization, but the cost of patronage was relatively low compared to the persistent escalation in substantive budget areas. Nor was it a particularly wise investment, since years of exclusion from the center of government had left the party a weakened, inadequate power base. When the crisis finally struck, Beame, though a creature of the party, was

in essentially the same position as his predecessors and therefore without the support to carry out effectively the necessary cutbacks.

The inevitability of the crisis is something the authors prefer not to address. But a city cannot long continue to practice deficit finance, the equivalent of inflation, without printing its own money—a measure which even the boldest New Yorkers failed to consider. Newfield and DuBrul instead attribute the onset of the crisis to the machinations of a bankers' cabal, thus seeming to relieve New York's upper-middle-class reformers of their responsibility for the city's plight.

Those bankers, along with state and federal officials and representatives of the business community, did come to have a lot to say about the institutional arrangements established to oversee retrenchment. Through the Municipal Assistance Corporation, the Emergency Financial Control Board, and the apparatus of the federal loan program, they intervened to change a variety of the city's policies, from imposing tuition at the City University to raising subway fares. In an attempt artificially to impose restraint upon the muni-

cipal labor unions, they demanded and won extensive union pension-fund investments in city securities, thus linking more closely the fate of the unions with that of the city.

Many of the changes made under the aegis of these institutions have been unfortunate, but more importantly, many would have been unnecessary had the city's government been able to control the growth of its budget to begin with. It is hardly instructive to label the present arrangement undemocratic, much more useful to recognize that for more than a decade the city's government had already been less than democratic. That government withdrew recognition of the needs of the large middle-class and ethnic populations, and failed to make coherent the needs of its remaining constituency. Yet democratic government depends upon the restraint of its participants and the articulation of a meaningful order of public preferences which reflects the citizenry's desires without distorting them. The government in New York City that fostered the destruction of democratic practices was hardly a permanent one, it was simply unworkable. □

## BOOK REVIEW

*Dispatches*

Michael Herr / Knopf / \$8.95

George S. Patton III

*Dispatches* by Michael Herr is an account of his experiences in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam war. As one who spent nearly three years of his life in Vietnam, in various capacities, I must say that I found Mr. Herr's book interesting. But, for the record, he gives little credit to any of the magnificent personalities I served over, with, and under during that period. According to Herr, very few of us there had much of a sense of pride, patriotism, or duty, virtues once considered the foundation of our country.

Mr. Herr speaks frequently of the "bone dumb grunts," and by this "handle" we must assume he is talking about the infantry. This characterization is entirely mistaken, and I doubt that our infantrymen would accept it. I think it is particularly tragic when one who has been called "the Stephen Crane of this century" describes infantry—especially Vietnam war infantry—in such a manner. Indeed, these soldiers were trying to fight a primarily infantry kind of war under some of the

most difficult battlefield and political conditions ever faced by American fighting men. They were confronted with a terribly difficult job: fighting for a confused and frustrated America in a war they were not permitted to win. By and large they performed well.

I believe that I speak for many commanders in that war, colonel and below, when I say that the fighting soldier was a "winner" in our books and not a "bone dumb grunt." The next time Mr. Herr writes of Vietnam, he should remember to research the local rules of engagement. As I recall, these included such constraints as "don't fire until fired upon," as well as free-fire zones. These rules, peculiar to the Vietnam war, restricted the ground combat soldier and, in several instances personally observed by this reviewer, cost him life and limb. The "bone dumb grunts" Mr. Herr speaks of generally complied with the rules and frequently paid the price. It was my lasting impression that their sense of duty confirmed General Douglas MacArthur's description of the American soldier as one of the world's noblest figures.

Throughout his book, Mr. Herr writes of his personal use of drugs and about

"getting stoned" while in the field. I would guess that his various "trips" may in some ways have affected his journalistic credibility. Herr's statistics on losses (both the enemy's and ours) are his and his alone (at least he identifies no source for them) and are of doubtful accuracy. His references to ".30 caliber automatic fire" are simply incorrect unless he is alluding to ARVN or Special Forces units. There was no such weapon used by the conventional units of the United States Army or Marine Corps in the Vietnam war.

This is a cynical, shallow report replete with most of the well-known four-letter words used in armies worldwide. In *Dispatches*, those who were against the war will find more grist for their mill. No one had much dedication, according to Mr. Herr. In my opinion, this is blatantly untrue. There was plenty of dedication at all levels within the uniformed services throughout the Vietnam war.

Despite the author's cynicism, there are parts of *Dispatches* which are quite well done; for example, Mr. Herr's description of Saigon:

Beautiful for once and only once, just past dawn flying toward the center of the city—at 800 feet.

*Major General George S. Patton III is Commander of the Second Armored Division, United States Army, at Fort Hood, Texas.*

In that space, at that hour, you could see what people had seen forty years before. The Paris of the East. Pearl of the Orient, long open avenues lined and bowered over by trees running into spacious parks, precisioned scale, all under the soft shell from a million breakfast fires, camphor smoke rising and diffusing, covering Saigon and the shining veins of the river with a warmth like the return of better times....

By 7:30 AM it was beyond berserk with bikes, the air was like LA on short plumbing, the subtle city was inside the war, had renewed itself for another day, relatively light on actual

violence, but intense with bad feeling: despair, impacted rage, impotent gnawing resentment, thousands of Vietnamese in the service of a pyramid that wouldn't stand for five years, plugging the feed tube into their own hearts, grasping and gorging.

This picture of Saigon by day and night is fine and, by my memory, very accurate.

Mr. Herr writes, "I went to cover the war, and the war covered me." This war affected him profoundly, as it did the

entire Army, myself included. It must be remembered that we all witnessed our nation suffer the first strategic defeat in its history. Each of us played a part in that defeat and holds a portion of the responsibility for it in his own hands.

Except for Michael Herr's personal cynicism, his inaccuracies, and his failure to discuss the American infantry in the favorable light they truly deserve, his story is probably worth reading. □

## EDITORIAL

(continued from page 4)

Howe, and the Rt. Hon. Charles C. Diggs? Meditate on the chances of the Rt. Hon. Daniel J. Flood, and is there any hope at all for the Rt. Hon. Joshua Eilberg, who as a member of the House Judiciary Committee observed: "Our citizens are afraid that if they take a position on a political issue their telephones will be tapped, their mail opened, and their tax returns audited as a means of punishment. This result makes it imperative that Richard Nixon be impeached"? Nearly fifty congressmen from the Watergate era have been indicted or are lying low. Even John Doar, Esq., chief investigator for the House Judiciary Committee during its impeachment hearings, now wriggles under the eye of a U.S. Attorney.

An astonishing number of the leading celebs of the Watergate Spectacular have seen their careers evaporate. What has become of the renowned Woodward and Bernstein? Neither of them could write. Their only talent as journalists was their ability to answer crank calls in the night, from whom no one knows, and the boys are not telling, at least not until the price is right. Neither of these hinds has done anything remarkable since Nixon's last helicopter flight, and I contest the notion that they ever did do anything remarkable except hog the show right up to the last limits of the plausible. What became of John Dean or Senator Daniel K. Inouye? My guess is that they are both afflicted with obscure and horrible diseases, never to be heard from again. And forget not that ancient gasbag, Sam Ervin, illustrious constitutional expert. He slipped so deeply into obscurity so rapidly that the American Express company exploited his instant anonymity in a television ad featuring him and Barry Goldwater's running-mate as two typical nonentities urgently in need of American Express cards—a fitting testimonial to the lasting achievements of Watergate.

Watergate, of course, is the most catastrophic instance of the Nixon touch. Heretofore Nixon had dizzied only individuals; now he stultified and laid low an entire nation. Watergate led to the election of the most ill-prepared president of this century and to the hitherto unimaginable—that is, an actual increase in barbarism in

Southeast Asia. What really brought on Watergate remains a mystery. Its fundamental issues grow increasingly hazy with the passage of time. Despite all the orotund promises of the episode, it has led to no grand reform. There have been no chastening lessons, no lasting heroes, and no useful myths. All we were left were dubious platitudes, and they evanesce further with every inescapable revolution of the planet. When it was over, our allies and our enemies were left rubbing their eyes in amazement. Today Watergate looks increasingly like a historic black hole in the national chronicle, and if that is all it turns out to have been we shall be fortunate. Its only benefit is that it brought the retirement of Nixon and with that a quieting of the frantic alarms of the Nixon maniacs.

Now the publication of *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*\* threatens to undo even that emaciated benefit. No sooner had it appeared in serial form than the maniacs were howling about the enormous profits and moaning that *RN* contained no lascivious revelations; the bedwetters fear a political comeback. In desperation a boycott has been slapped on the book, and in the book trade many a staunch defender of the First Amendment is promising not to stock it. I, of course, purchased a copy immediately, and if I had the funds I would purchase thousands more, gladly sending them to high elected Nixon maniacs with the forged inscription, "Compliments of Stansfield Turner." If my work would put the book on the best-seller list, so much the better.

The book itself is the usual bouillabaisse of a presidential memoir, considerably better than LBJ's but still not up to the readable two volumes written by the irrepressible Harry. Some of the writing is surprisingly crisp and insightful; other passages are agony. And as Nixon leads us through thirty years of prodigious political drama-turgy, the reader becomes steadily more aware of the odd obliviousness about this famous narrator. In every scene, grand or minute, Nixon remains always in the dark about the unearthly powers pulling his strings. Was there something momentous at issue in the Hiss case? He is elliptical. What was the reason for the Cold War? After 1968 he seems to have forgotten. Who were his enemies and why did they

hate him? His certitudes only go so far.

Nixon, contrary to the fears of his more obsessive opponents, was a rather ordinary man, distinguished only by his gigantic will to escape ordinariness. Hence he devoted himself to foreign policy. What surer flight from Whittier than to expatiate in the language of power and to ponder the use of power on a global stage? Nowhere is Nixon's fascination with international relations discussed more vividly than in *With Nixon*,† the product of Raymond Price, a gifted Nixon aide who seems to have escaped the Commoner from Whittier unscathed. *With Nixon* is the best discussion of Nixon's character, of the odd standards by which others weighed him, and of the even odder predicaments into which he so often fell. Nixon dreamed immense dreams, and the setting was usually the whole wide world. Even during the grimmest moments of Watergate, times when I had been lead to believe he was plotting the overthrow of the Constitution, the pool fish was grandly discoursing to his aides or the Middle East, China's geopolitical interests, Brezhnev's yearnings for a fat and shiny Lincoln. It is an odd twist—and a mark of the inferior men we have elected to the White House—that Nixon was one of our best-equipped presidents for international diplomacy. Yet he blew up, and with his passing, millions of citizens in foreign lands slipped into the claws of Communism and barbarity. Herein lies the saddest part of the Nixon legend. Nixon is gone—hurrah!—but so is any semblance of a serviceable foreign policy.

Nixon was indeed the most reviled man ever to sit in the White House. He was also the easiest laugh in our history. But it is unlikely that Papa Brezhnev ever laughed at him. Ho Chi Minh and General Giap had very little fun at his expense. And as westerners go, Nixon was probably Chou and Mao's only drinking buddy. The final irony of Nixon is that the very qualities that earned him the wary respect of tyrants drove many American liberals right out of their minds. Is it possible that the qualities that made him successful abroad made him a disaster at home? Or was he ever a success anywhere? An indication of the preternatural circumstances surrounding the man is that merely by asking the question one sets off sirens and shouting matches. [

\* Grosset & Dunlap, \$19.95.

† Viking, \$12.95.

# C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

## Knee-jerk Iconoclasm

Although I defer to few in my admiration for the rambunctious insights and savory prose of Tom Bethell, his dismissal of Margaret Mead (*Capitol Ideas*, April 1978), who remains one of the great figures of this century's thought, is an act of knee-jerk iconoclasm. Like Bethell, Mead is never afraid to express her opinions and if a number of them are off the mark, they nonetheless retain a freshness and idiosyncrasy, a refusal to be abashed by new fashions of thought, and a matter-of-fact conservatism about family roles that are rare in an aging pundit, beloved of the media. Moreover, her major work, *Male and Female*, is still the most lucid, sensitive, and incisive exposition of the differences between the sexes, and in recent years she has defied the entire feminist establishment by declaring the ubiquity and biological basis of patriarchy. In this regard, she has shown more guts than most of the normally-dominant males in the conservative movement who can boldly stand up to General Torrijos but who collapse into incoherent mumbles when faced by a feminist. Conservative leaders, in general, still accept and propagate the myth that earning differences between men and women are caused by "discrimination" rather than by hormones and by the family roles that are indispensable to civilized society.

George Gilder

Tyringham, Massachusetts

## Taking Rights Seriously

In his reply to Raoul Berger (April 1978) Hadley Arkes proves at some length: (1) that the framers of the Constitution were inspired by natural-law ideas commonly held at the time; (2) that the framers thought (a) that natural rights justify the rights, limitations, and powers articulated in the Constitution, (b) that natural rights are independent of, antecedent to, but consistent with the Constitution, and (c) that natural rights are self-evident truths.

Mr. Arkes, who shares these beliefs (in some form), thinks that they argue against Mr. Berger's view that the Constitution must be interpreted as allowing the judiciary to grant only those rights and duties specified in it, however much other rights or duties appear morally (or naturally) justified.

Does Mr. Arkes really believe that natural (moral, human) rights legally can supersede or extend those articulated by the Constitution, or that natural rights can legally give powers, or grant rights, not articulated in the Constitution? If so, of what use is the Constitution? Why did the framers, who believed in natural rights, frame positive constitutional law, if natural rights can replace it? Actually they are

irrelevant and so is, therefore, Mr. Arkes' argument.

If Mr. Arkes believes that we (including the judiciary) are bound by the Constitution and cannot replace, extend, or supersede it via natural rights when these are not granted by it, then it does not matter whether one believes that there are such self-evident natural rights and that they justify what the Constitution tells us to do. Their value would be heuristic. Positive constitutional law alone would be decisive in conflicts and litigations. We have a living constitution by following it, not by replacing it with whatever moral ideas we feel nature tells us to follow. Mr. Arkes' belief in moral values and their objectivity and truth (whether or not correct) is quite irrelevant; so are they, until and unless embodied in positive constitutional law. Else the Constitution would be redundant.

Mr. Arkes worries that, unless his view of self-evident moral values is accepted, rights and duties may be arbitrarily decreed by majorities. This is a *non sequitur* in logic and has not happened in our constitutional history. On the contrary, Mr. Ronald Dworkin has lately succeeded in demonstrating (see his *Taking Rights Seriously*) once more that natural rights can justify anything one wishes. In the Bakke case Dworkin's natural-rights interpretation leads him to the opposite conclusion from that reached by Mr. Arkes. Mr. Arkes' practice is better than his theory, whereas Dworkin's practice is as good as his theory—shared by Arkes. *Caveat emptor.*

Ernest van den Haag  
New York, New York

## Mr. Arkes replies:

I am reluctant to take up more space in these columns than I have already, but frankly I am puzzled by Mr. van den Haag's puzzlement. A constitution may have a special importance in establishing the precise features that define the character of any particular regime and the way in which a government of law happens to be conducted. It may be useful to establish, for example, that we shall have a legislature composed of two houses, and that the veto of an executive may be overridden by a two-thirds vote of both houses. These kinds of features are useful, but there is no principle which establishes that either one of them is strictly necessary to a regime of law. The most we can say is that we are obliged to establish provisions of this kind, and the ones I have mentioned are not inconsistent with the principles that underlie a constitutional order. It would take a leap of logic, then, to suggest that the very presence of a constitution indicates that moral understanding (or a sense of natural rights) has been displaced by positive fiat as the source of all law.

In other parts of our Constitution it becomes evident that the literal provisions in the document make no sense unless they are informed by an understanding of the principles of constitutionalism that exist anterior to the Constitution, and which the Constitution is trying to express. And so the provision against self-incrimination would be absurd if it were read with literal strictness to free any person from an obligation to yield his fingerprints or to present his body in a court of law where he can be identified. The provision of the Constitution makes sense only when read against a fundamental commitment, arising out of the principles of lawfulness, to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty: Those distinctions may not be made in a reasoned way when torture is used to extract confessions, and it is that use of coercion which must be seen as the core of the provision against self-incrimination.

But Mr. van den Haag himself has recognized all of this—i.e., he has recognized at different times that the provisions of the Constitution must often be understood in the light of the true ends or character of the Constitution, which depend in turn on the principles of constitutionalism. Those principles counsel lawfulness, which means that they oblige us to respect explicit provisions of the Constitution until they are lawfully repealed. For that reason Lincoln registered his obligation to respect the provision in Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution, which required the return of fugitive slaves—even though he understood that slavery was incompatible with the very idea of constitutional government. But as Harry Jaffa has explained, Lincoln understood that the commitment to law arose from the same principle that established the wrong of slavery. Mr. van den Haag may preserve his respect for law, but the principled source of that commitment remains obscured, and it is hardly assuring to be told that it rests on grounds that are safely non-moral.

I am afraid that the only *non sequitur* I find in Mr. van den Haag's last paragraph is one of his own authorship: viz., that since "natural rights," in the hands of Ronald Dworkin, can be used to "justify anything one wishes," natural rights must be arbitrary and meaningless. That is rather like saying that since George McGovern used the claims of "moral" argument in a zany way, "moral" propositions must have no meaning—and no binding force in our law.

Mr. van den Haag makes a gratuitous gesture when he persists in representing my own views in the language of "belief"

(continued on page 43)

## Time

A comforting bull from the Secretary of State, Mr. Cyrus Vance, regarding the common decency of the Plains, Georgia, Miracle Man and Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, moderate Stalinist:

When the two men eventually sit down together, they will get along well. Both of them are strong men and have similar dreams and aspirations about the most fundamental issues.

[April 24, 1978]

## District of Columbia Bar Journal

A forward-looking moment with Theodore J. Garrish, Esq., the articulate general counsel of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission:

Principally, I think it is going to be in the rule making area. We are going to have increased activity in regulations of chronic hazards. I expect that we are going to have some increased efforts to deal with carcinogens. We will also be spending a substantial amount of resources in some areas like aluminum wiring. We have a tremendous amount of litigation right now in the aluminum wire area. We are handling some of the defense work relating to aluminum wire and that is going to continue and probably be a resource consuming kind of activity for the next year or so. One of the things that is going to come up is our sleepwear modifications which will be changes in the sleepwear standard. I think you will see some activities in the lawnmower area and upholstered furniture before the year is up.

[February 1978]

## The Great Books Series

Stirring passages culled from *Are We All Nazis?*, a book of popcorn psychology written by Prof. Dr. Hans Askenasy, the latest poriferan orator to hit the campus lecture circuit:

The asinine and hypocritical inanities of a William Buckley, perpetually inebriated by his own verbosity, are due not to ignorance but to defective moral development....

As for Richard Nixon, let me just say that he is by all objective measures a textbook psychopathic criminal whose misfortune was to have been born in a democratic country. Let me forget, he was elected twice—the second time by a historic landslide. His opponent apparently had the misfortune to have been decent....

Christ said this to people who did not like his preaching: "Ye serpents, ye generations of vipers, how can ye escape damnation of hell?..."

So we begin with a paranoid schizophrenic, suffering from delusions and hallucinations, a vicious, hypocritical man unconcerned with social issues....Following the Prince of Peace came the appropriately named Dark Ages. Then Crusades and the medieval centuries. Then Luther and witch trials. And so on down to the Nazis and us....

From our study of the Nazis we have found that they were essentially normal, ordinary men. And...we now know that those Nazis and these Americans,—which is to say you and I—for all our superficial differences such as time and place, are, psychologically speaking, interchangeable. Which is food for thought.

*Are We All Nazis?*

by Hans Askenasy

[Lyle Stuart]

## The Progressive

Mr. Bryant Avery, managing editor of the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, informs agape readers of the *Progressive* about yet another stimulant to his concern, to wit: Shedd's Food Products, makers of Shedd's infamous peanut butter:

Recently, Shedd's has been using a marketing gimmick: If you buy their five-pound plastic pail of peanut butter, you also receive two free "Wacky Packs" inside. For the uninitiated, "Wacky Packs" are stickers such as my four-year-old might paste on the fender of his bike.

Nice gimmick, right? Wrong. Look at what we got. Flabbergasted, I sent off a note to



Shedd's, and received a speedy reply. The thrust of my complaint was that the label for "Extra Strong Commie Cleanser" obviously reinforces the kind of bigotry most of us call McCarthyism—that persistent strain of U.S. right-wing crackpottery that defines itself as guardian of Our Way. I also related it to the ideological insanity that led us to rain death and destruction upon Indochina. And, incidentally, the slogan on the sticker is historically absurd, linking "Hippies, Yippies, and Flipflops" (whatever they may be) with communists.

I realize that the whole thing may have been intended as a joke, but it isn't funny. Since "Wacky Packs" are made by Topps Chewing Gum, Inc., I've been wondering what other little goodies are being distributed to our heirs.

[May 1978]

## The Nation

A powerful act of the imagination turns a review of a mediocre book about America in the 1950s, *The Great Fear*, into obligatory reading for the *Nation's* dizzy throng: There follows, nevertheless, some 700 copiously footnoted pages delineating, in numbing detail, the American Gulag, more prosaic than the Soviet version, but chilling enough in its vast scale, thoroughness, petty vindictiveness, and hypocrisy. People weren't shipped off to the wastes of Siberia; they were made outcasts in their own neighborhoods....People were so frightened that they bought *The Nation* on the newsstand rather than risk getting it in the mail.

[April 22, 1978]

## New York Post

Miss Harriet Van Horne, a professional hysteric, reviews the television presentation "Holocaust":

As we watch these brave decent people march to the showers—where poison gas came out of the spigot—and see the Nazis at their most bestial, we may think "Americans would never allow this sort of thing to happen." Then, with a stab, comes the single word, "Vietnam!" Our own mini-holocaust.

[April 14, 1978]

## The Humanist

Another laugh on poor Sr. Giovanni Jacop Casanova, deceased and unavailable to defend his art since 1798:

The healthiest environment for sexual growth is one that provides the richest possible banquet of experiences and models from which the individual can learn without fear of social censure. If each individual is free to act according to his or her sense of sexual identity preference, and role, then men and women will be truly able to express who they are.

[March/April 1978]

## Saturday Review

The tough-minded William Cole speaks his mind about one of modern liberalism's most romantic gallants, Dr. Fidel Castro:

As a knee jerk liberal, I am of two minds about Cuba: I applaud the accomplishments of Castro's revolution but am uneasy about the absence of civil liberties. It was a gorgeous romantic revolution, in which Castro, to quote one of his aides, showed "audacity, stylized imagination"—qualities that are still on view according to photojournalist Fred Ward's *Inside Cuba Today*....

[April 1, 1978]

**Bloomington [Indiana] Herald-Telegraph**  
Godfrey Sperling, liberal, lays down the limits of our First Amendment rights:

Mr. Califano's plan would (a) emphasize the dissemination of information about the danger of smoking and (b) place a further curb on tobacco advertising. Here it seems relevant to ask whether it isn't time to put an end to such advertising. Why should the print media be permitted to push a product the government deems dangerous?

[February 6, 1978]

## New York

Prettily put prodigies of radical thought from Angela Davis, "black communist" Making the event even more memorable Miss Davis revealed these thoughts in *New York* magazine's "Special Home-Furnishing Issue":

I'm not pessimistic about change in this country. I'm convinced that this country will one day be socialist....I have no bodyguard. In order to live a good life and make some intellectual and political contributions I had to myself of paranoia....Having grown into movement, my life is tied up with struggle. I try to find joy in personal existence because it's necessary to energize oneself....Most people think this system can no longer work them. But without a movement all is chaos and a contradictory response.

[April 17, 1978]

CORRESPONDENCE  
(continued from page 41)

and "feeling"—a language that he knows is foreign to the argument I made. The self-evident truths mentioned in the Declaration of Independence are no more a matter of "belief" than the existence of Ernest van den Haag; and those who do not know Mr. van den Haag better may

suspect that he is seeking to achieve, through linguistic reduction, what he has not been able to accomplish with his substantive argument. Of course the dispute would move to the question of *a priori* and necessary truths, but I forbear to say more than I have already lest someone write in to tell us that *a priori*, necessary truths are nowhere mentioned in the Constitution. □

## classified

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### PERSONAL

Dear Leo Joseph: *Pourquoi, perche, warum, and cur* do you not write to *La Folle du Nord*?

### MISCELLANEOUS

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# HOW TO TELL WHEN YOUR CAR NEEDS A TUNE-UP

AND HOW TO BE SURE YOU DON'T PAY FOR MORE SERVICE THAN YOU NEED.

Remember the old Spring and Fall tune-ups? There was a time when GM cars needed tune-ups every year. But that was a long time ago. Since 1973, we've been building cars that don't need anywhere near as much routine maintenance as they used to.

Now, a lot of people are getting tune-ups they don't really need. Probably out of habit.

**Break the habit, and you'll save yourself some money.** The maintenance schedule and the owner's manual your GM dealer gives you with your new GM car will tell you exactly what scheduled maintenance is required and when. Some of the newer schedules may surprise you.

For example, spark plugs used to have to be changed every 12,000 miles. Now it's every 22,500 or 30,000, depending on which new GM car you bought. For most drivers that means changing plugs every two years instead of every year.

When you bought your first car, you probably changed oil every 1,000 miles. We upped it to 6,000 a few years ago; and now it's 7,500 on all new GM cars except diesels.

Or take distributor points and condensers. They never need replacing with GM's new high energy ignition system. It doesn't have any points or condensers.

**If you do have trouble with your car, just fix what needs fixing.** When you take your car in for service, tell the mechanic exactly what's happening. If it's hard to start "hot," but starts okay when it's "cold," say so. If it doesn't perform the way you expected, describe just how and where it doesn't live up to your expectations. Then it'll be easier for the mechanic to pinpoint what's wrong, and he won't have to make unnecessary repairs. That can save you time and money.

Some things have to be watched more carefully, depending on how and where you drive your car. For example, if you do a lot of driving on dry, dusty roads, you may need to change the air cleaner and oil filter more often than the maintenance schedule indicates. Remember, the maintenance schedule that comes with your car is based on average driving conditions.

**If you have an older car that still needs an annual tune-up, what should it include?** There are some basic things to be checked: spark plugs, points, condensers, idling speed, and drive belts.

It can't hurt to check the air cleaner and fuel filter, tire pressure, and brake fluid, either. And when you do take your car in for a tune-up, don't be shy. Find out exactly what you need and what you're getting for your money.

We're trying to make GM cars easier and more economical to service. We've been able to stretch out the maintenance intervals for new GM cars, which should reduce the cost of routine maintenance; and we're working on engineering improvements that should reduce the amount of required maintenance even further. We want to be sure our cars perform well for their entire lifetime, without costing you a lot of time and money in maintenance. That's better for you and better for us.

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